

About Our Fall Gathering Speaker...

Melva Nokes: An Example of Grace and Faith Under Extreme Pressure

Melva Noakes, our speaker for the Annual Fall Gathering, is the author of *April Morning*. On April 19th, 1995 she was the CEO and Executive Director of the America's Kids Day Care Center located in the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, OK. When the bomb went off, her life, along with the lives of countless others, was changed forever.

The day care center had been burdened by administrative problems and only recently had Melva been brought in to solve them. She came to the day care at the federal building with an untarnished record of 16 years of experience running day care centers in Oklahoma City and the surrounding area. She had an innate ability to succeed where others had failed. In less than a month, working with the 2 teachers and other staff, Melva created a place where parents felt good about leaving their children in downtown Oklahoma City. A place that offered security and a promise of growth and development of unlimited potential for the infancy to pre-school children.

In the days following the bombing, she did not collapse in despair, nor did she surrender hope. She worked with the police, the fire department, and federal officials while she stood by the parents in their grief. She found an inner strength from her faith that became a beacon and a voice for the grieving parents and survivors.

Melva Noakes symbolizes the courage to live and move forward through tragedy. Her story is the inspirational story of a woman who has experienced the widest range of emotions: the exhilaration of watching children grow and thrive, and the tragedy of witnessing as they perished.

Her story shows us the meaning of survival, the depth of the human spirit, and the strength of faith.

Please don't miss her moving presentation.

(Contains excerpts from the "About the Author" section of her book)