

BAPTIST FEATURES

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JANE'S OFFERING WENT TRAVELING
BY: Lula Doyle Baird

One day Jane started out to Sunday school with her purse in her hand. She had an extra offering in it today because she had earned some money by playing with her neighbor's baby. Jane felt very glad as she heard the money jingling in her purse because this was the fourth Sunday and the offering today would help in many places.

The offering Jane gave did not stay long in the basket. It went traveling. First it traveled with a lot of other money to the Sunday school treasurer's office.

The next day the offering traveled to the bank. When the Sunday school treasurer had banked all the money, he wrote a check. Some of this money is used to employ missionaries and teachers for work in . The rest is sent in a check to Nashville where it is put with other checks from all over the Southern Baptist Convention. Here is one way some of the money was used:

In a village in Africa there was a little girl named Kembo. She was very sick. Someone brought her to the mission hospital. The doctor and nurse took such good care of her that Kembo was soon well again. When her father came to take her home he said to the doctor and nurse, "Thank you for helping my little girl to get well. I am glad we have this hospital here."

"I am glad for friends in Baptist churches in America who have built this hospital," said the doctor.

The nurse said to Kembo, "And perhaps a little girl just like you carried her money to church because she wanted to help someone like you get well."

Kembo gave a big smile of thanks as she and her father left the hospital.

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CHILDREN'S PAGE
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THE ANIMAL FIESTA
BY: Catherine Blanton

Maria was lonely. In Mexico she had many friends. Here she had no one. Oh, there was Papa. But he left early in the morning to work in the fields. And there was Mama. But she had to care for the baby brother.

So, that left only Tonio, her spotted dog. Then today even he had run away.

Maria didn't cry about it. Crying did no good. It wouldn't take her back to Mexico and it wouldn't send Tonio home again. Besides, Papa and Mama would be sad if they heard her crying. They would know she wasn't happy.

The noise coming down the street made her look up. At first she thought it was a circus parade. There was a boy, a girl, a donkey, and a goat, all dressed up.

And then she saw Tonio. Why, he was walking as if he were in the parade, too. Only Tonio had no fancy clothes. But you could see that Tonio was happy.

"Is this your dog?" asked the boy, coming to Maria's gate.

The little girl smoothed down her brightly embroidered skirt. "Carlos says maybe he wants to go to the Fiesta with us," she said.

"Fiesta?" said Maria. "I--I thought you just had those in Mexico."

Carlos dark eyes brightened. "Oh, we have a Fiesta of the Animals at Neighborhood House. The good teachers there say we should remember the happy customs of Mexico. So, today is the Fiesta of the Animals."

"And we are taking our pets with us. This is Popo," said the little girl, patting the goat's head. "Doesn't he look pretty in these yellow flowers?"

"Lupe make them all herself," said the boy proudly. "She helped me fix up Poncho, too. We think maybe he will get a prize."

The gray donkey had bright paper flowers all over his head. Around his neck was a string of silver bells.

"There's always a pinata at the Fiesta, too," exclaimed Lupe. "Do you know what a pinata is?" she asked.

Maria nodded her head. They had had one only last Christmas, but that was in Mexico.

Suddenly Carlos said, "But why do you not take your dog to Neighborhood House? You would like it there."

Maria said, "I--I do not know about Neighborhood House. What kind of a place is it?"

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"Oh," cried Lupe, "It is where you go when you need a friend. We have lots of friends there."

"There is a playground, too," said Carlos. "We play ball sometimes."

"I like to play on the slides," added Lupe.

Maria said, "My! I wish I could go to Neighborhood House. I have no friends here."

"Then you can," said Lupe. "You can go with us."

Poncho shook his head and the bells tinkled. It made Tonio bark.

"See, he wants to go," cried Carlos. "He wants to go to the Animal Fiesta."

"But he is not dressed up," said Maria. "He has no flowers or bells."

Lupe smiled. "I'll give him some of Popo's flowers."

"And some of Poncho's bells," said her brother.

So Maria went into the little house and told her Mama about Neighborhood House and the Fiesta. Mama was glad that Maria had made some friends. She found a bright ribbon to put on Tonio, too.

The yard at Neighborhood House was full of gaily dressed boys and girls and their pets.

The teachers lined up the children and their pets and they marched about. You could see them better that way. Maria was glad when Poncho and Popo were both given prizes.

"Now it is time for the pinata," said Carlos.

The Pinata was made like a big paper rooster. It was hanging in a tree above the children's head.

"You will all have a turn," said the teacher. But don't try to hit it until you are blindfolded."

"The pinata has candy in it," whispered Lupe to Maria. "We will have to run fast when it is broken."

Because Carlos and Lupe had both won prizes they were given first chance to hit the pinata. They tried, but missed.

The other children tried, too. But they could not hit it either. Then it was Maria's turn.

The teacher tied the white cloth about her eyes. She held the stick tight in her hand. Then WHAM! she let it go. There was a big crack. The children screamed.

Someone pulled the rag from Maria's eyes.

The teacher said, "Hurry, or you won't get any candy!"

But Carlos said, "Oh, yes, she will. I have enough for her."

Then the Fiesta was over. Maria and Tonio, Carlos and Poncho, Lupe and Popo made another parade walking home together.

Maria's mama came out to see them. "Ah, is the Fiesta all over?"

And Maria replied, "The Fiesta is over. But tomorrow I will go back to Neighborhood House to learn to paint. There is a class for girls and boys like me."