

THE HERALD

Newsletter of the Orrville Grace Brethren Church

Who's Who at OGBC?

Jodi Robinson



Phebe Hodgdon was born on September 24, 1999 in Youngstown, Ohio. She has two younger brothers, a husband Isaac and a sweet daughter Selah. Growing up, she lived at home with her

parents and siblings in Clinton, Ohio. She feels very blessed to have grown up in a Christian home. She was home-schooled and she had lots of friends at church.

Her ancestry includes her mother who came from South Africa and her father from Youngstown. They went to visit her grandparents and other relatives in South Africa about every 10 years or so. She knows a little bit of the language spoken there-Afrikaans (a Dutch dialect), which she 'kind of picks up' when she is there visiting with her family. She took Spanish classes in school but doesn't remember much of that.

Her favorite class in school was English (reading and writing). She was taking science courses but her mom gave her some good advice: "No matter what you decide to do in life, reading and writing will be needed". So, she concentrated more on those things. She wanted to be a teacher or a nurse when she grew up.

Her favorite childhood memories were the wonderful Birthdays that her mom planned. Every birthday had a theme, and her mom made Phebe's favorite foods for all the meals of the day.

Her mom did this for every member of the family and she still does. Her whole family still gets together for these special Birthday events.

When it came time to choose what courses she would take in college, she knew that she wanted to work with people and help people. She had a hard time deciding between going to nursing school or taking elementary education. She kept making lists of which would be better to do. She was constantly praying and asking God what she should do because she wanted to follow His will. Finally, a friend told her that "God can't steer a parked car." So she decided to go to nursing school. She loved it from her first experience working with patients. She has a true heart for nursing.

While going to nursing school, she worked varied jobs including teaching swimming and then as a lifeguard at the YMCA, Griffiths Pool and the C.T. Branem Natatorium. She also worked as a Nursing Student Tech at Summa Barberton during the Covid epidemic, catered weddings and as a waitress at Outback. She currently works as a Registered Nurse at Aultman Orrville in the ER approximately 24 hours a month. At some point, she may return to school to get the degrees required to teach nursing.

When asked "What was the best thing you ever did for someone else?" she said, "Making an impact on patients and families by educating them during a crisis or painful situation, providing comfort and prayer."

When asked, she says she is good at baking and anything that has to do with people. She learned lots of things from her mom including

baking and cooking meals. Her mom made a huge Thanksgiving meal every year and Phebe had certain parts that were hers to do from a young age. Phebe loved the chance to make stuff as a way of loving and serving her family. She enjoys making bread and all of Isaac's favorites. Besides baking, she does a little crocheting and quilting and enjoys painting old vinyl records.

Her favorite color is blue. She likes all flowers but especially Dahlias from Karen Geiser's garden. Pasta, especially ravioli is her favorite food and she likes to drink Warm London Fog Tea Latte with lavender. They have a mixed lab dog which is still a puppy in many ways and a real handful. She says, "It probably wasn't the best idea to get a puppy and a baby so close together."

Her favorite Bible verses are Psalm 91:14-16. *"Because he has loved Me, I will save him; I will set him securely on high, because he has known My name. He will call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him. I will satisfy him with a long life, And show him My salvation."* She prayed these verses over Isaac when he was in the armed services and continues to pray this over him and Selah.

When asked if she has a hero, she immediately responded "Isaac." "He amazed me after Selah's birth. His 'Dad Game' postpartum was perfect with all the help and support and taking care of me and Selah from the first minute."

Phebe shared her testimony for us: "I was saved when I was 6 or 7 years old in my mom's bedroom. I was asking questions about my Sunday School lesson. I made a prayer for salvation that day. Being the overachiever that I was, I did all the expected things, like praying and carrying my Bible and sitting and listening in church. When I was in middle school at Church Camp, someone told me that I should read the Bible for myself, so I did. For the first time, my faith became a relationship with Christ. My family switched to a new church with a large youth group with lots of opportunities to learn. I was shy and had never truly felt like I belonged; but I finally decided to join a Disciple Leadership Group. That was life changing. I was so welcomed that it helped me to welcome others."

A friend, who played in a band at OGBC, invited her to meet the band members and so she went to a gathering. She met Joel and Isaac, who asked her to come and play keyboard with their band, which she agreed to do. During that time, she was taking a Christian College course on line. Isaac helped her with her weekly essays that she needed to write and she fell in love.

In 2022, she began attending OGBC regularly. She is involved in the ministry by helping with Grace Bible Club, the nursery and as a member of the Church Ensemble which sings at Christmas, Easter and does caroling at Christmas time.

When asked what she wanted to say to God when she meets Him in Heaven someday, she said: "I was never perfect but I think I was always in a growing process. Thank you for all my blessings".

When asked if there was anything else she would like to share, she said: "Read your Bible. It will change your life. Don't fret about what you are going to say to people when you witness. God will provide the words".

A Forgotten Martyr: Mrs. Agnes Prest

Josh Buice

Many faithful names are lost to the shuffle of history, but they're not forgotten or forsaken by God. Time passes and their names are forgotten, but they didn't die in vain. One such person who was an unlikely martyr was a woman who we simply know as Mrs. Agnes Prest.

Born in Cornwall, England, Mrs. Agnes Prest lived a simple life, yet one marked by an extraordinary devotion to her faith. Little is known about her early years, but her adult life reveals a woman profoundly affected by the shifting religious tides of her time. Married and with children, she found herself bound to a family that held fast to the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. Yet, her conscience compelled her toward a different path—a path aligned with the teachings of the Reformation, which preached salvation by faith alone and a rejection of what she viewed as the "abominations" of the *Romish Church*.

The tension in her household grew as her

commitment to Protestant beliefs intensified. Her family pressured her to conform, but she was resolute in her embrace of the gospel. Eventually, she made a heart-wrenching decision because of the fact that she was being persecuted in her own home. She left her home and family, choosing to live independently by earning a modest living as a spinner. For Mrs. Prest, the call to serve Christ outweighed even her closest earthly ties. She sought solace in the simplicity of her faith, rejecting the empty rituals of the Roman Catholic Church and embracing a life she believed was in line with the pure teachings of Scripture. This dedication would soon set her on a collision course with the powerful religious authorities of her day.

Mrs. Prest's firm stance on matters of faith did not go unnoticed. Accused of heresy, she was eventually brought before Dr. Troubleville, the bishop's chancellor, and other officials in Exeter. These men saw her as an unlearned woman, easy to dissuade from her "foolish" ideas. Yet, what they encountered was a woman whose theological convictions were firm and unyielding.

During her examination, the bishop attempted to corner her on the issue of transubstantiation, the Roman Catholic doctrine that the bread and wine of communion become the actual body and blood of Christ under the blessing of the priest. In her straightforward yet profound manner, Mrs. Prest responded by questioning the very foundation of this belief. She said: "If Christ sits at the right hand of the Father in heaven," she reasoned, "then how can He be here on earth in a piece of bread?"

The authorities were both bewildered and angered by her reasoning. How could an "uneducated" woman like Mrs. Prest so confidently refute their doctrines? She argued with a clarity that left them speechless, drawing from sermons she had heard and Scripture she had absorbed over the years. Her questions pierced through and exposed the false gospel of her accusers, leaving them with little recourse but to accuse her of being "foolish" and "mad." She was deemed a danger to their cause, and her refusal to bow to their authority only solidified their resolve to silence her.

Though confined and frequently taunted by her captors, Mrs. Prest remained undeterred. She was often brought before priests and friars who sought to wear her down with questions and accusations. Her responses were unwavering; and she refused any attempt to sway in her faith. Her words, though deemed offensive, sprang from a deep rooted convictions regarding the true gospel of Jesus.

During her imprisonment, Mrs. Prest's resilience continued to shine with amazement. She was offered the chance to recant and to return to her family and live a quiet life if she would only renounce her beliefs and submit to the Roman Catholic mass. But she refused. To one who encouraged her to reconsider, she replied, "Though I am not learned, I am content to be a witness of Christ's death... my heart is fixed, and I will never say otherwise." When money was offered to her, she turned it down, saying she was "going to a city where money bears no mastery."

Even when she was finally sentenced to death, Mrs. Prest's spirit did not falter. She praised God, claiming, "This day have I found that which I have long sought." Her journey to the place of execution was marked by steadfast faith, as she continued to proclaim her allegiance to Christ alone. In her final moments, she refused to recant, declaring that she would never abandon her "heavenly husband" for her earthly one, nor her "heavenly children" for her mortal offspring. To her, Christ was all.

Bound to the stake in 1557, Mrs. Prest lifted her voice in prayer, seeking God's mercy. As the flames rose around her, she remained calm, her mind fixed on the eternal life that awaited her.

Her earthly suffering was short-lived, but her legacy of unshaken faith lives on to this day. Although she is dead, her life still speaks. This unlikely martyr remains a testimony worth remembering and a story worth repeating. We too must count the cost and remain steadfast in the faith once delivered to the saints.

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FUNNIES

At an event famous for giving away awards in bizarre categories, the emcee enthusiastically announces, “The next prize will go to the laziest person in the audience. If you think you qualify, raise your hand.” Everyone in the room raised their hand except for one man. “Congratulations! You are the winner,” says the emcee to that man. “Your prize is this \$100 bill.” The man replies, “Would you mind coming over here and putting it in my pocket?”

When a new restaurant opened nearby, my wife and I made sure to get a table on opening night. It was our server’s first time working at a restaurant and she was bubbling over with enthusiasm. Case in point: I asked, “What is the soup du jour?” Beaming with the pride of one who has found her calling, she answered, “Oh, that’s the soup of the day.”

While carpooling, we pulled up to the driveway for our next passenger. We honked and waited, honked and waited, and honked again. Our coworker finally came out. “I’m so sorry I kept you waiting,” she said, climbing into the car. “But I only heard the third honk.”

Not all bulbs are bright:

- A woman I know bragged on Facebook that she scored 84 on her IQ test. She thought it was out of a hundred.
- I had a guy proudly tell me that he could

write with his left and right hand equally well, because he was amphibious.

- I remember telling someone that I was distantly related to Marie Curie. He patiently explained to me, “It’s pronounced Mariah Carey”.

Why do baby clothes have pockets? Are people really going up to babies and saying, “Hey, can you carry this for me?”

Watching golf on TV is like watching grass grow with a bunch of people in the way.

I was mired in stop-and-go traffic when I accidentally rolled into the truck in front of me. I apologized profusely, and after seeing there was no damage, the truck driver and I got back in our vehicles and drove on. Until, that is, I hit him again a minute later while he was stopped at a red light. This time, the driver climbed down from his truck, walked over, and asked, “How do you stop when I’m not here?”

My uncle was in the hospital when a nurse came into his room and asked him, “Do you use oxygen?” With an incredulous look on his face, my uncle replied, “Doesn’t everybody?”

Scanning the diner’s menu, I noticed that the offerings included both a hero and a sub. “What’s the difference?” I asked the waitress. “I don’t know. I’ll find out.” She walked into the kitchen and returned a minute later. She says, “They’re both exactly the same”. So I said, “Ok, I’ll have one.” Grabbing her pad and pencil, she asked, “Which one do you want?”