

## 2.2

Any **Little House on the Prairie** fans out there? Whether you have read the books or watched the tv version, there is one thing that's certain. Those who settled the western parts of the United States really took on a challenge. They forged their way through the wilderness, built their own homes, and eventually built their own communities. In our world of fast food, neighborhood development, and fast transportation it's hard to imagine.

When I look back at the small towns that sprang up connecting the homesteaders, one of the things that is fascinating is how they all pitched in to build things for one another. If winter was approaching, the house had to be built first, but a barn was next on the list. Why was a barn so important? Well, the animals had to have shelter from the frigid cold and snow drifts, protection from wild animals, and a place to recover if they were injured. The barn also sheltered their farm equipment and animal feed, and gave a dry place for the owners to care for the animals. It was very important.

Many times, a barn raising became a community event. There would be men cutting lumber and preparing boards, while others built the studs and framework. The women might be gathered preparing food for the day or food to store for winter, and some pitched in as they could to help the men. And there were always children, and they always had a job to do, but there was time for fun and games, too. At the end of a hard few days work, there would be a barn – a safe, sturdy shelter for the animals for the winter. And there would be a big celebration – food, dancing, storytelling...oh, to have been there to hear them rejoice and share those stories.

Every STP class production is like a barn-raising. Yes, you heard me right. It is a community event and we all come together to create a safe space for our children to use their gifts to explore the arts. STP provides material that protects their hearts from the world, choosing scripts that bring honor and glory to God. STP gives them a place to come when their hearts are sad, encouraging them with the truth of scripture and reminding them that they are adored by God. STP is the location, *but it takes each one of you to be the community of volunteers* who comes together to raise the barn.

Your children will be doing hard work this year, memorizing lines, music and choreography to produce a play that allows them to use their gifts to glorify God. And they will have the chance to say, "Look what God did!" at the end of the process, through their performance and at their cast party. You don't want to miss this opportunity to help them produce their class show. If your family longs for community and is looking for faith-filled connections in our disconnected world, then you have found

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the place. Use your gifts, let us teach you along with your children about the beauty of community when we all pitch in to raise the barn.

TABLE TALK - God is doing great things through ordinary people at STP. How do you see God using your family in your child's class production this year?

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2 Corinthians