

A photograph of a dining table with a vase of yellow flowers, a mug, and an open book. The table is wooden and has a blue cloth and a patterned cloth on it. In the background, there are curtains and a window with blinds. A red banner with white text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

Finding God
IN THE **EVERYDAY**

A red and white checkered banner with a white rounded rectangle in the center containing the author's name.

Lillie Ammann

Finding God

IN THE

EVERYDAY

A Devotional

by Lillie Ammann



Armonia

Publishing

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Finding God in the Everyday
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Scripture indicated KJV taken from the King James Version.

In memory of my late husband, Jack Ammann,
with love and gratitude for forty-five years of
love and support

To the glory of God and my Lord and Savior,
Jesus Christ

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Introduction

These devotionals are based on my personal experiences or those of people close to me. Some of the names have been changed to protect the privacy of others. Details have been combined or omitted because of space limitations. Otherwise, these devotionals are stories of how I found God in the everyday events of my own life. I hope they help you find God in your everyday life.

Thanks to Robert Hruzek for hosting the blog group writing project that inspired this book.

I appreciate my blog visitors who encouraged me by reading and commenting on my posts.

Thanks to my faithful friends who prayed with me throughout this process and to those generous souls who read and gave me feedback on the first draft.

The Call

Then the Lord came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for Your servant is listening." ~ 1 Samuel 3:10

I don't usually hear God speaking to me in a voice. Instead, I get a strong feeling that won't go away or circumstances seem to lead me in a certain direction.

Nearly four years ago, I started putting together a book. I had participated in a group writing project on the theme of "What I Learned from..." for a couple of years. Each month, the host announced the theme, and participants wrote blog posts (articles) on that topic. The host blogger then wrote a post that included links to all the entries in the project.

All my posts described a personal experience I've had, followed by the life lessons I've learned from the experiences.

After the project ended, I decided to compile my posts into a book. I contacted the originator of the project to be sure he had no objections to my using the theme of his group writing project as the theme of my book. He encouraged me to write the book, and I started compiling the posts from my blog.

Then my husband's dementia worsened to the point that he needed constant care. I put the book on hold. After Jack's death and more than a year of grieving, I decided to take up the project again.

I downloaded all the blog posts I had written for the project and chose other posts that fit the theme of “What I Learned from Life.” I came up with additional ideas and wrote more articles. I organized all the articles (about ninety) into a logical order and was about halfway through the first edit.

Then one night I woke and sat up in bed with a strong feeling: This book is supposed to be a devotional book.

But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?" ... "Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in time past, nor since You have spoken to Your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." ~ Exodus 3:11, 4:10

The feeling that this book is supposed to be a devotional was strong, but I doubted. For several months, silent conversations took place in my head.

"Who am I to write a devotional? There are lots of devotional books already in the market, written by people much more skilled than I am."

Don't worry about other writers and other books. Just focus on the one you are going to write.

"Lord, my writing is simple and plain. Devotionals should be beautiful and eloquent, like the 1928 Prayer Book."

Your book will be FINDING GOD IN THE EVERYDAY. The language and the subjects should be everyday.

"I'm sixty-eight years old—too old for something of this magnitude."

Moses was eighty when he led the Israelites out of Egypt. Joshua was ninety when he became the leader of Israel. Noah was 600 years old when he entered the ark.

"I've already put a lot of time and effort into getting the book to this stage. Changing it to a devotional book will mean I have to start over."

Yes, it does.

I talked to a writer friend and mentor. When she heard about the devotional book, she reminded me of several reasons it wasn't a good idea: The articles varied dramatically in length, from 200 words to 1200 words. A devotional book should include devotionals of a consistent length. The pieces were all about my experiences, which wasn't appropriate for devotionals. I'd had the idea for this book nearly four years ago and had made a lot of progress on the current manuscript. It didn't make sense to start over and do something so different.

Yet I still had the strong feeling that I was supposed to take the book I had drafted and turn it into a devotional book.

Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!" ~ Isaiah 6:8

Although I was struggling with this call for months, I received encouragement and prayer support from my brothers and sisters in Christ at All Saints Anglican Church. I had accepted that this was something I had to do, but I still felt overwhelmed.

I have always wanted to be like Isaiah—"Here am I! Send me!"—or like Mary—"Behold, the bondslave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word." Instead, I responded like Moses—"I have never been eloquent"—and Gideon—"Please let me make a test."

However, even though Moses and Gideon questioned their callings, they answered the calls and did God's will.

Each year during both Advent and Lent, I add extra devotions to my quiet time. Whenever All Saints hands out a reading plan, I follow it. Otherwise, I find one from another source or choose readings on my own. I read the Scripture and write a brief meditation and a prayer in my journal. The following year, I post those journal entries on my blog.

Shortly before the beginning of Advent last year, I was scheduling blog posts for the season. Suddenly, I realized that I was posting devotionals.

"Lord, I didn't think I had ever written a devotional before. Now I recognize that these journal entries are devotionals. They're different than the ones in the book, but I do have experience writing devotionals."

My child, I have been preparing you for this.

Converting articles written for a different purpose into devotionals is different from writing my thoughts and prayers in my journal, but I realized I could do it with God's help.

Some of the blog posts couldn't be used because they were too long and couldn't be broken into parts as

I did with others. Some of the pieces weren't suitable for a devotional book, so I had to write more.

God gave me the idea to commit to write two devotionals a day, five days a week. He was faithful to give me two ideas daily, just as He gives us our bread one day at a time.

As I wrote the book, I didn't know what the end result would be. Whether it was simply for my own spiritual growth or whether it would be shared with others was not important at that point. My job was to write the book as God called me to do.

And write the book I did.

Good Luck

When I was in elementary school, the hardware store in the little town nearest our family's farm held a drawing. To enter, customers filled out a form with their contact information and choice of prize, either a freezer or an evaporative cooler.

No one in our rural area in the 1950s had air conditioning. We thought a window unit that cooled by evaporation of water, commonly called a swamp cooler, was air conditioning. Why, if we had one of those, we'd be the fanciest—and coolest—folks around! All of us kids were excited to think we might win an air conditioner.

But when Daddy filled out the form, he checked the top box: freezer.

"Daddy," we protested. "We already have a deep freeze! We want an air conditioner."

"It doesn't matter," he answered. "We're not going to win anyway."

He was wrong. He won—a freezer. I'm sure he didn't consider asking for a different prize. Daddy never wanted to rock the boat. I suspect he considered the freezer a better prize anyway. A large family with cattle to butcher and garden crops to harvest could easily use two freezers. A swamp cooler in one window in one room wouldn't make much difference in the big, old rambling farmhouse.

For a long time, we kids whined, "But we wanted an air conditioner."

We would never have prayed for an air conditioner. That was so far-fetched we wouldn't have even thought to ask. The only reason we wished for the prize in the drawing was that the words on the entry form put the idea in our minds.

God wants to give us the desires of our hearts, but He wants the desires of our hearts to line up with the desires of His heart. Jesus Himself told us that if we pray, ask, and believe that we have received what we ask for, He will grant our requests.

If our desires are aligned with God's will, we can ask Him, fully believing that He will answer, and He will. He's not a heavenly Santa Claus, doling out toys and goodies to those who ask. He is our great provider, our Creator who wants only the best for us. If we ask Him to match the desires of our hearts with His and believe He will grant our requests, He will give us the desires He places in our hearts.

Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him. Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you. ~ Mark 11:23-24

Lord God, thank You that You give me the desires of my heart when I align my desires with Yours. Place the desires of Your heart in my heart. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.