

# Found Sleeping in Church

Uncertain, Sheila paused at the door of the small country church. It was empty of people.



“It’s so quiet in here,” she thought. “I will just sit and rest for a moment, and then I will be on my way.”

She didn’t mean to fall asleep. It was just so warm and comfortable, and she was so tired.

As she settled into the back pew, the air included the slight mustiness of worn rugs mixed with the smell of furniture polish. Dust mites danced in the sunbeams coming through the broad windows.

As her eyelids grew heavy, she could hear the building settle with minute creaks and groans. Somewhere, in the sunshine outside, she heard the sparkling laughter of a young child at play.

Then her eyes closed and she slept.

The young pastor came from his study near the front of the church and headed to the parsonage. He was surprised to see the young girl on the back pew, head resting against the high-end piece, sound asleep.

“Why, she couldn’t be more than 14 or 15,” he thought. “She must have run away from home.”

Slipping out quietly, he went next door to the parsonage and asked his wife, Brenda, to come back to the church with him.

Brenda gently awakened Sheila. Although she was embarrassed to be found asleep in the church, Sheila quickly responded to Brenda’s gentle love and concern.

The church offered food, shelter, clothing and prayerful compassion to Sheila.

In the years to come, Sheila often thought of that small church and the caring couple she met there.

It was a memory she savored. As she moved from shelter to shelter, she would often tell anyone who would listen that on one occasion, she met Jesus.

And his name was Brenda.

*Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares (Hebrews 13:2 KJV).*

– Beecher Hunter