

DES MOINES PRESBYTERY
JOINING HANDS DELEGATION TO EGYPT
OCTOBER 28-NOVEMBER 8, 2006

Monday, October 30

After watching a Bollywood movie in flight to Cairo we arrived at 2:30 a.m. with "I Heard It Through the Grapevine" on the overhead music—such is international travel today. We were through immigration and had our bags by 4:00 a.m. What a pleasant surprise then it was to see our crazy hosts, Nancy Collins, Rev. Emil and Fadya Zaki, and Dr. Nabil Sisostros to give us a warm welcome.

Lunch at 12:00 p.m. was again attended by Rev. Emil, Nancy and Dr. Nabil. Rev. Emil set the tone for the day and explained the history of the church in Egypt. He is hoping his church will let him retire and he can prepare his notes and research for a book. One of the things the early church was to start hundreds and hundreds of one-room schools in the villages. The model in the late 1800s was to start a one-room school for all children in the village and then hold Christian prayer services in one evening. Now in 2006 there are 127 villages where the church owns property but there is no pastor. The model today may be a social worker/pastor that the church supports to minister to the community.

After lunch we went to "Old Cairo" and visited Al-Muallaya, the "Hanging Church" named so because it is built on top of the ancient Roman Wall. The tedious restoration continues in the ancient Coptic church. We also visited the Ben Ezra synagogue, Church of St. George, and the new Coptic Museum. The Coptic Museum had wonderful displays of 2nd and 3rd century art that depicted carvings of Daphne and Aphrodite, noting that the transition from paganism to Christianity was a lengthy process. Also on display were 7th and 8th century Coptic script Bibles. Then in the 11th and 12th centuries the Coptic Bibles were written in Arabic, showing the arabization of Egypt.

Our evening meal was held at a fountain-side restaurant in the Al-Azhar Park. The park, a special project of Suzanne Mubarek was converted from a garbage dump. The soft lighting, stone pathways, fountain, bubbling waterways and broad vistas of Cairo City and the Citadel makes this park an ideal place to bring your fiancé. We enjoyed it as well.

Our meal was made even more pleasurable by having Dr. Nabil along with Rabab and Adel x join us with their new baby, Miriam. Rafik Nagy, his wife x and sons, Sameh and x joined us as well. Again delightful conversation with new and old friends. What a joy it has been to know Rabab as a young professional woman and then a wife and now a mother. Rabab, busy as ever, has kept her ties with the Women and Society Association but her daily work is now working with an Islamic social services internet website. She organizes the people who volunteer through the website. This enables her to sometimes take Miriam to work with her, but Rabab's mother does not mind spending time with her first grandchild as well.

The day was filled with history—history of the early Coptic church and Rev. Emil's history of the Presbytery Church in Egypt. We look forward to seeing how God will work through our friends, Dr. Nabil, Rabab and Adel, and Rafik.

- Elizabeth Smith

Tuesday, October 31 (Happy Halloween!)

Waking up in Cairo, Egypt! Wow! And the four-hour train ride to El Minya. Now I see why in September, Rafik Nagy was telling Gary and me we should visit. Lovely place. Whole different atmosphere than Cairo seemed to be after only one-half day.

Went to New Vision Association. What enthusiastic, energetic, compassionate people in this wonderful organization. Working so much with and for poor people, children, the disabled, solid waste and potable water. It was wonderful to travel to the communities of Mohammed Bedauin and Itsa to see all they have done; even starting of the new projects today!

God is truly in this work. To see the children's drawings, their release of their feelings. The plantings of trees—started just this morning. Hearing enthusiastic words from the leaders of the student center. Seeing the pride the children took in their karate lessons.

I give thanks to see all this. I give thanks to the Lord that He has given the right leaders to the right children and young adults at the right time.

I lament that all of Cairo, all of Mohammed Bedauin, that all of Tella, all of Itsa—and all cities and villages and rural areas—don't know these fine people and the work they do. What drive these people have in helping humankind.

The Lord has chosen these compassionate people as leaders and doers. Go with God.

-Diane Badgett

Wednesday, November 1

We left our hotel (or rather Nile side hotel!) to drive an hour south to a village called Mallawi. As we passed through the countryside we saw many villages supported by the agricultural landscape. Chimneys tower above the palm trees and Mosques. Dr. Nabil informed us that many families support themselves with a second income of brick making. Before the Dam at Aswan was constructed there was only one growing season because they were not able to farm during the flooding season. And now crops can be rotated year round.

We reached our first destination which was the Intelaka Association in the village of Malawii. It was unique to anything we had experienced yet because it was started by a group of disabled youth. In 2000 CEOSS began its program for education for housing for the disabled and that inspired the realization that no one knew of the rights appropriated to the disabled. The awareness of what government funding is available got the group started. In 2004 they joined the network. Their goals at the beginning were to 1. Know their rights and 2. with the knowledge of the law, approach the community to see why the laws were not working. For example there is a law that 5% of the work force should be disabled persons. Intelaka found the names of people in the books of employers that were employing positions to people who were not disabled.

This group has 15 men and 5 women on their board who are both Muslim and Christian. The project translated from Arabic named "I want my rights" is for raising awareness in the community and to empower the disabled. The group has influenced schools, churches and Mosques to add ramps. They have added flashing lights to the school bells to help the deaf. There is no school for the blind in Malawii but they have added some cassettes to the library. There are a lot of disabled people in Malawii. They obtained the signatures of 3,000 to say the group represents them. They were able to work with a politician who was campaigning and had a sympathetic view towards their cause. Intelaka gave him the 3,000 names and he got their support and he was elected.

It seems that the most important thing for the members of Intelaka was to get together for 1-2 hours a day. It was obvious that not only for the legal support these individuals were supporting their self esteem. Sharing a common experience between people who suffer and expressing grievances is essential to the human condition. I believe that it is the first step in speaking truth to abusive power. They expressed that they learned so much from one another. This is proof that one can not fight alone.

We left Intelaka for the train back to Cairo. I slept quite a bit. Next time I come to Egypt I have to sleep more at night and not during the day. Our group made it to Cairo and that evening we went out to eat at the famous Egyptian restaurant Felfela. The food in Egypt is delicious. My favorite is the stuffed vegetables and grape leaves. After dinner (and a bowl of o maly) my mom, Dave and I walked near the Grand Hotel to go find an internet café. On the way there we walked though a city market with lots of fresh bread, fruits and vegetables. There was even a stand with fresh rabbits, still alive and hopping. The man working at this stand let me hold one. It was a very sweet rabbit but I had to remind myself that this was probably soon to be someone's dinner. The night ended at a café surrounded by many men, drinking Turkish coffee and then back to the hotel.

-Laura Smith

Thursday, November 2

This was a day of contrast. It showed that there are many paths to the same end. After a hearty Egyptian breakfast, we took our van to New Horizons' headquarters—a spacious modern facility with computers, new office furniture and well-dressed people. They explained their goals, visions and functions in the community. It was time to see

firsthand what this—another in many wonderful organizations—was doing in the communities. We traveled back in time—to a pottery factory from a thousand years ago. Children were mixing clay by hand, the kilns burning garbage, and women were in a small room learning to read and write and to be electricians. This was one of New Horizons' projects to help clean up the environment by running the ovens on gas instead of garbage. Also trying to get the children out of the harmful environments and bring literacy to knowledge-hungry people.

We then rushed off to the Association for the Deaf. The van squeezed down a narrow alley between the buildings and stopped where no one would realize miracles were happening. After a climb upstairs, we were greeted by excited people; their hands couldn't stay still. Most of the people of this organization were deaf mutes. Their hands were busily telling the story of how they were changing lives by trying to change laws and make people aware of laws already in place, giving them rights and benefits. Then the visual aids started blinking and jumping up and down—they were modifying alarm clocks by adding lights and vibrating boxes. A simple alarm clock was allowing people to get up for work and make it to school on time. Miracles come in many forms and are accomplished by many different means. O yeah, we left the alley and went to the Opera to experience the miracles of music.

-Gary Badgett

Friday, November 3

Today's activities included the following: Together for Family Development (TFD) board meeting; lunch with board members at Upper Egypt Association (UEA); tour of Ibn Tulun Mosque and Gayer Anderson Museum; shopping trip to Khan al-Khalili bazaar; and dinner with Rafik's family at their home.

It's always great to begin the day with a "typical Egyptian breakfast." The Cosmopolitan Hotel offers such each morning. Remembering back to my first breakfast there on the 2002 trip, I wasn't sure I would be able to look forward to such a meal to begin the day, but they grow on you. Favorites of mine include the karkadeh (hibiscus) juice, strong coffee, tasty fresh tomatoes and cucumbers, several breads topped with jellies and cheese, hard-boiled eggs, foul (boiled fava beans) topped with lemon juice and salt and/or cumin, and the hot barley cereal with milk. There is a consistency to breakfast wherever you travel in Egypt. The other constant was the familiarity of faces of the Cosmopolitan staff who are always courteous and eager to serve you and make you feel at home. It was interesting to learn that several of them had been employed there for 30+ years.

Due to a misunderstanding on the time we were to be picked up by the van driver for the board meeting, we got to experience a glimpse of life on Cairo's downtown streets as we waited. The reason for meeting the driver on the street was to avoid the hassle of the hotel wanting to make sure we had proper security for traveling as a group, especially of Americans, but we as individuals have always felt safe as we venture out whether on the streets of Cairo or rural Egypt. Secondly, the streets are empty on Friday mornings being the Muslim holy day (Fridays are like our Sundays) and people have been out late on Thursday nights—which I can attest to from the noise I was hearing from my hotel room—so most Cairenes are home sleeping, resting for worship and to later fill the streets for social activities. And thirdly, there is the guy desperate to make a living from tips for flagging down a cab or put a bag in a vehicle for you, or the guy trying to sell an item from his armload of trinkets/jewelry—millions of people doing what they can to make a living in Cairo.

For myself, being able to participate in the board meeting of TFD was one of the highlights of the trip. First, the facility (UEA) feels like "home" as it is where we stayed on the 2004 delegation trip. Again, familiar faces, great food and hospitality, and great atmosphere with nice facilities. All of the network members were represented except two: Samira from the Women's Union due to a recent surgery, and Nada from the Village of Hope due to a prior commitment for her group. It was so very exciting to see how far the network had progressed over the past year. They are definitely in the "action" mode of their goal to integrate the disabled into the Egyptian society, especially with the youth into the education system. As Dr. Alaa said, they have sown the seeds and the seeds are sprouting. The focal point of their advocacy is mobilizing several media events by five of

the network members located from Alexandria to Cairo to rural Upper Egypt. Dr. Alaa thanked them for their spirit and faith in standing up in spite of their frustrations.

They have plans to involve TV and newspaper coverage to increase the awareness of the rights of the disabled in the local communities, schools, and with elected officials. Many plan to include local individuals who are handicapped to share the frustrations they encounter daily.

To help them harvest results of their work, they have hired a lawyer, Mr. Taher abn Nasr. He spoke about the right to education for handicapped children as provided by the Egyptian government, and the lack of clarity in the laws that exist. They will be working on proper wording for a document to have ready when the assembly meets in January.

The Bible verse that comes to mind when I think of the network members and their collective efforts is Amos 5:24—"But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." They are diligently working for justice for the handicapped to be integrated into Egyptian life. They are all concerned souls advocating for the handicapped. Their commitment and love I find very inspirational.

After dinner with the board members, we traveled to one of the largest and oldest mosques in Egypt. Ibn Tulun was built between AD 876 and AD 879. Called a "Friday mosque" its open-air courtyard is large enough to hold the whole male congregation of the district for prayers on the holiest day of the week. Built entirely of mud brick, the mosque is surrounded by an outer courtyard which was meant to act like a moat to keep the secular city at bay. The sheer size of the outer and inner courtyards I found to be truly awesome. Other highlights of the mosque included climbing the spiral minaret which provides a great view of the city and the pyramids in the distance; the central domed fountain; the brick-built crenellations inspired by ranks of standing soldiers lining the top of both inner and outer walls; and the arcades running around the courtyard that provide shade for the worshippers.

Located next to the mosque is the maze of rooms of the Gayer Anderson museum, a legacy of a British officer serving in Cairo in the 1930s. It includes two restored 16th century homes that are beautifully decorated with mashrabea screens and marble inlays. I found the displays to be most interesting and intriguing—especially the guide hiding both Nancy's in the secret room.

A trip to Cairo would not be complete without a stop at Khan al-Khalili—one of the biggest bazaars in the Middle East. Centuries old, it is jam-packed with all kinds of trinkets and souvenirs and is a great place to find a nice rug plus a pair of earrings to match the necklace I got for my mother last year. After experiencing the Khan you know why it was listed as one of the "world's top 1,000 places to see before you die."

A most rewarding and fulfilling day was topped off with dinner with Rafik's family at their home. Having spent much time with Rafik earlier in the fall during his visit to Iowa it was nice to spend the evening with him, his wife and two sons. The molokhia soup along with the stuffed pigeon were exceptionally good. Relationship is one of the key aspects of Joining Hands and this was a wonderful example of that relationship.

-Dave Best

Saturday, November 4

This day was a journey. The six of us were accompanied by Dr. Nabil and Saphie and Nancy as we traveled by minibus from Cairo to Alexandria. In years past we had gone by train, so this drive up the desert highway gave us the opportunity to see more along the way. Two stops were scheduled—Anafora, a retreat center, and San Makarios Monastery—both Coptic Orthodox.

The journey was not only one of miles. Anafora was unlike any place I had been in Egypt. I felt an instant connection to the grounds and the buildings, inside and out. Brightly colored hand-woven rag rugs covered everything—floors, chairs, cushions; furniture was low to the ground and rustic; the exteriors were the color of the desert and the interiors were bright white. Candles by the hundreds stood in containers filled with sand—along walkways, around rooms and in niches. The space between buildings was planted with herbs, flowers, and trees laden with dates, olives and oranges. A waterway flowed from the main building to a meditation room, to the chapel, to the sleeping rooms. Dr. Nabil pointed

out that the channel formed a question mark when viewed from above—and the chapel was the dot.

What really touched me about Anafora, though, was Bishop Thomas. He greeted us in perfect English with a warm handshake as we arrived, and then joined us around the table as we drank tea and coffee. He explained his vision for Anafora as a place to bring people together to gain wisdom, which he defined as thought combined with heart. As he described the center's daily routine, I thought to myself that it would indeed create a fertile ground for wisdom—and God's kingdom—to grow. As Bishop Thomas spoke I noticed the deep laugh-lines of his face surrounded very intense and earnest eyes. He told us that in order for true and loving relationships to exist, people have to be perfectly honest with each other—they have to tell each other when they feel wronged. My thoughts turned to the South African truth commission. Bishop Thomas referred to the Coptic Orthodox and Evangelical churches in Egypt; Nancy asked a question about this and we listened as he described his perception of problems that exist between the two. The stories he told made it easy to see his point. But he told them with love and gentleness. For me it was a journey to a place of peace along the road to Alexandria.

The second stop, at San Makarios Monastery, was a different experience altogether. Dr. Nabil and Saphie would not have been able to enter if they had not been with us—the monastery is closed to Egyptians, and only opens to tourists as an historical site. One of the monks was showing a group of Germans through the sanctuary and added an English explanation when we joined them. We learned about the symbolism of the adornments and the story of the structures. When the Germans left, our guide told us that he had been a pharmacist before coming to the monastery, and that a number of monks had been doctors and other professionals before joining the order. He pointed out the icons he had painted. A lone man was lingering nearby and when our tour was over he introduced himself as a fellow American—an Episcopal priest from Minnesota, whose daughter had attended Coe College in Cedar Rapids. He had written a book about the desert monasteries and was visiting several and intended to spend four days meditating in the desert. I am always amazed and delighted when journeys bring people together who come from the same place but don't meet until they are so very far from home.

We traveled on to Alexandria, to Fairhaven where we were joined by Rev. Gendi. Dr. Nabil took us to Balbaa for dinner—a big, wide open, bustling restaurant. Samiha joined us there and our table was soon groaning with salads and breads and fish and duck. The laughter and friendship around the table provided a festive finish for our journey—an appropriate ending to the feast for our eyes and food for thought we had encountered this day.

-Nancy Lister-Settle

Sunday, November 5

A restful night was spent at Fairhaven in Alexandria. But it did seem like the kids were playing in the schoolyard at 6:30 am.

Sunday, in Egypt is like our Monday, so it was business as usual. We stopped at the Bank on the way to church to use my debit card. The bank wouldn't even look at poor Dave's traveler's checks. Yes, Dave was poor one more day.

We made our way to Sarai Presbyterian church which is only a few blocks from Fairhaven. The first hymn tune we recognized as Crown Him with many Crowns and was sung in Arabic with much gusto and verve. The shutters of the church were opened wide. Later in the service, during a prayer, the Mosque Call practically drowned out Rev Gindy's voice. I was wondering if there was a little more than competition for street noise. Rev. Gindy performed two infant baptisms during the service. Family members swarmed around the babies like bees, 360 degrees, taking photos and videos of the ceremony. It was a very happy occasion. Communion was also served during the service. After Church, we were greeted warmly by many in the congregation. There seemed to be a substantial number of diminutive female older members on our side of the church. They reminded me of the tiny Italian grandmothers of St. Anthony's in Des Moines. How many Christian Churches are supported by the foundation of tiny saintly souls?

We had a lovely brunch in the courtyard after church with some of the elders and Christian Ed director. Yes, again we took pictures of the food. We had salty and sweet fancy

hors d'oeuvre-y things either rolled in herbs or dripping with honey. And a round sandwich that I can only describe as a subway, stood up on end in layers. See why we took pictures? Discussion with the members showed that the church is very vibrant with its outreach programs.

We returned to Fairhaven and prepared for an afternoon of sightseeing. Dr. Nabil and his wife Saphie were with us. Dr. Nabil spent his summers as a child in the family holiday flat in Alexandria. He was basking in the opportunity to act a tour guide and show us the sights. First stop was the Alexandria Library. Architecturally, it is a marvel. From the outside it looks like a low sloping face of a pyramid. From the inside, the ceiling is open to 9 floors of shelf and meeting rooms. The roof has slit like windows that are meant to look like eyes. Inside there are 3 museums, a digital library, hundreds of computer terminals and shelves and shelves of books. 40% of the texts are in English, 30% is in Arabic and the other 30% is in other languages.

On our schedule was a carriage ride on the Corniche, the walkway along the Mediterranean Sea. It was cold, drizzly, dark, and the traffic was the evening rush. The day before the weather had been so bad that two ships had broken from their mooring and washed ashore. We debated. Dr. Nabil negotiated a price for two carriages and we did it. Next time, think how we will appreciate the bright blue Alexandrian sky above us.

Dr. Nabil and Saphie took us to a restaurant call Asteria. They said it had special meaning for them. I wonder what that could be, for the still honeymooning couple. We had pizza and fish. And some of us had fish on our pizza, anchovies or shrimp. It was all very, very good. After the meal, we walked to the tram. Dr. Nabil said we had to stop and try a childhood favorite, liver sandwich. Fortunately, there was a double-decker tram waiting at the station and we hurried to catch it. No liver sandwich this time. The tram runs a few blocks from the coast, parallel to the Sea, as does everything in Alex. We had a 40-minute ride back to Fairhaven. Along the way Laura and I talked to two medical students. They said, "American does not show this side of Egypt, do they?" I said unfortunately, no. I told them we wished more Americans would come to Egypt so we could get better information. I told him that the Egyptians in my medical community in Des Moines were very well liked and respected. They said that after medical school, they were conscripted to spend two years in the army. They were looking forward to completing their obligations.

We returned to Fairhaven and had tea with Nabela, Alice and the staff. No liver sandwiches.

-Elizabeth Smith

Monday, November 6

Waking up in yet another city of Egypt—Alexandria—and knowing that our trip is half over.

Today we are to visit Village of Hope and finally meet Madame Nada. But first, some local touring. Alice was good enough to take us on a tour of Fairhaven, and the wonderful work that Rev. Gindy has put together. Gardens, classrooms for women sewing, men in carpentry classes. Also classrooms for men and women doing appliqué, shredding paper for making cards, and the big looms. We saw the children working, as we learned that they were being taught their names and addresses. We also saw children playing. In all the rooms, we saw people learning, really enjoying themselves in the hard work of learning life skills.

Madame Nada came in her van, with her son and Sami. We stopped first at the Alexandria National Museum. Quite a nice museum—it holds extra interest, knowing that it had been used as the American embassy in Alexandria.

Then a stop at the Pillar of Pompeii. Quite the spot—the huge pillar, the sphinx, many columns laying around having been excavated, the walls as boundaries of where to dig next, and discovering while we stood admiring the landscape above.

From there was the light lunch of baked goods—direct from the Village of Hope!—on the way to our destination. On our arrival, we saw the bakery, gardens, carpentry shop, small looms for weaving, paper folding—and all the products that these wonderful hands-on opportunities produced. What great work for Madame Nada, to take the disability of a son and turn it into such a huge help for disabled and elderly, both. On the way back to

Alexandria we saw and heard the wonderful operetta performed by young, old, disabled alike to get the idea across to all that one can help and benefit from the other.

The evening was ended with hot coffee and tea at the Yacht Club where Madame Nada's husband joined us. Afterward on the streets of Alexandria came the "best ice cream in the city." The night was capped off with conversations at Fairhaven, then dessert and more conversations at Rev. Gindy's home.

A very full day, with everything only Egypt can provide and is known for—ancient sites, people helping people, and hospitality.

-Diane Badgett

Tuesday, November 7

Our morning was a little bit nervous because we thought our train left at 7 am. We waited for our bus to come to Fair Haven and the clock was reaching 6:45am. We almost took a taxi to the station when our van showed up. All of us were anxious to get to the train so we rushed out the bus. Once we found Dr. Nabil he told us that the train didn't leave until 7:20am, so we can relax. I was relieved.

We came back to Cairo from Alexandria around noon. We went to Seti Center which is a part of the Special Education Training Institute, Caritas International, and the Catholic Social Service agency in Egypt. We met for four hours because this organization covers many fields. Seti began in Egypt in 1967 to work with the displaced during the Suez War and in 1987 they started to work with disabled children.

Their model was to train those who were already community workers in the government. To revitalize existing structures in each village for the mothers and child workers they instructed these workers to identify children with disabilities. They could not wait for separate schools to be built so they established small service centers in each community. The organization called this Family Rehabilitation and it was used to show parents how to train children and vocational rehab to help support their families. For example if the uncle in the family is a carpenter, they train the disabled child to help with some step in the carpentry business.

Seti Center has developed videos and tapes in Arabic because there are few training materials in Arabic. This is also a challenge because many families were illiterate. The productions of these films are made right in the center.

There are eighteen community projects. One is to train nurses, physicians and teachers on how to break the news of a disability and send them to the right recourses to get help. Seti has a counseling program to help families with early intervention. They have a program for mothers and children to come together in an open class with each other. Often classes have Christian and Muslim mothers working together. With the use of a one way mirror Mothers are observing their children's learning process and taking notes.

Seti has targeted fifteen private schools for inclusion. 5 in Alexandria, 6 in Minia and 4 in Cairo. They work with teacher training and the headmasters and the other families in the schools. They help with the syllabus to change for the inclusion. This project of evaluation is targeted to reach 300 children a year. Teachers are receiving bonuses if they include disabled children in class, so this helps the search for more children to include.

Seti Center provided the research that has useful to another organization we visited called New Horizons. The study gave statistics for integration and about the costs of ramps and changing building codes. It was widely covered in the media just within the past month. Also just recently a group of Cambodian teachers came to Seti to train on how to integrate disabled children in the classroom. What an inspiration and a testament to Gods work!

After the meeting was finished we met with Pastor Emil's friend Emir to escort us to the Pyramids. What an adventure. I believe it was the fastest trip to the site in the history of all visits. We didn't realize that the place closed at 4pm. So the guards were trying to shuffle us out. Luckily Emir helped pull some strings since this was our only chance to be in Giza. We had a wonderful time riding camels (a tourist must!). We went to see the sphinx and then hopped back on to the bus to go to Rev. Emil's church.

The service that evening was for the widowed women of that community. Some of the women we were told were abandoned by their husbands. Most of them are illiterate.

So they sing Christian hymns to the tunes of traditional Arabic songs. It was quite beautiful.

After the service we had a very good home cooked meal provided by Soad and Rev. Emil's wife. Many of the other elders brought their specialties. Soad made sure I ate well, as is the Egyptian hospitality. After the meal we traveled to Nancy's house for desserts with our dear friends Dr. Nabil and his wife Saphi. I will miss the food; however I think I will miss the people the most. What an influential experience the trip has been to me. I am afraid I will be more confused about my path in life after this trip. I have seen so many people doing the work of God. My only hope now is that I will have to keep my prayers for direction and my focus on God's will. With the most sincere gratitude for everyone on this trip I hope you all know Egypt will always be with me.

-Laura Smith