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Cedar Springs of Inspiration

A publication dedicated to providing ideas, inspiration and resources to use in ministry.

Major June Newbury
Editor, Canada and Bermuda Territory

Further copies available from
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NEW YEAR GREETINGS FROM THE WORLD PRESIDENT OF WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

2007 - Women's Ministries Centenary Year

Dear Sisters in Christ,

It is my privilege to greet you at the beginning of a very significant year for women's ministries in The Salvation Army. One hundred years ago, here in London, England, on Monday 28 January 1907, Mrs Florence Booth met with other Salvationist women in the Cambridge Heath area. William Booth, her father-in-law, felt called to preach to the poor and marginalised but he was very aware that many of their lives were miserable and ignorant. His daughter-in-law, like his daughters, caught the vision and went out to do something for the women of her neighbourhood. This was the beginning of the Home League, a movement for women that now spans the globe and is the means of lifting up thousands of women worldwide. Weekly or monthly meetings bring women together for a programme of **worship, education, fellowship and service** — a good balance of spiritual and practical growth and development. Annual rallies and fundraising efforts are highlights of the year, making women feel that they too can make a difference in the lives of others.



Through the years, two Bible verses have been constant themes: **'She looks well to the ways of her household' (Proverbs 31: 27)** and **'As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord' (Joshua 24:15)**. Then, in the year 1999, quietly and without fanfare, Commissioner Kay Rader introduced a new verse into the 'Guidelines for Women's Ministries', looking forward to the new millennium in the year 2000. **Psalm 101:2(b) : 'I will walk in my house with a pure heart'** placed a new emphasis on holiness of heart. Maybe in our busy lives, we need this more than ever before.

The Salvation Army continues to fight evil in many places, including the home. One evil which particularly affects women is that of sex trade trafficking. Not only is this severely damaging to the women victims, it is also damaging to marriage and family life. Pornography — **often accessed in the home** through modern technology - feeds the appetite for sexual variety. Pornography is addictive, so that many men and boys become dissatisfied with wholesome, loving sexuality, seeking excitement elsewhere. The commercial sex industry thrives and The Salvation Army tries to reach out to women who have become victims of this trade. Some of them are held in situations of slavery and coercion.

The year 2007 sees the Army in 111 countries worldwide. The gap between rich and poor is still as wide as ever. The need for women at all levels to be uplifted, empowered and motivated is a continual challenge to our hearts. In some places, the old patterns of work and worship are changing rapidly, and women's ministries as a movement needs to change and re-model. **Let this year be a year of new commitment, new vision and new courage. Let us continue to 'fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith' (Hebrews 12:2).**

With love in Him, prayers for you all and warm greetings for this 'centenary' year,

Helen Clifton
Commissioner
World President of Women's Ministries

**MESSAGE FROM THE TERRITORIAL PRESIDENT
OF WOMEN'S MINISTRIES**

Dear Missioners,

Prayer is having something to say with the hopeful certainty that someone is listening. The content of Cedar Springs becomes an ear to our world with insights into God's empowerment.

The theme "Live Strong" is not meant to challenge us to live only by the strength of sheer willpower. For me personally, strength is found in my weakest moments of surrender to a Christ who cares to listen to my inner world. Strength is found in listening out for new directions, methods and holy spirited renewal.

Our brokenness recreated in a vulnerable strength appeals to our seeking world.

As women together we link our weakness to an adventure in Christ-centred connections of new strength.

Plunge into the springs of salvation waters and take another thirsty spirit with you.

Blessings,

M. Christine MacMillan
Commissioner
Territorial President of Women's Ministries



Territorial Project — 2007



In 2007, Women's Ministries will raise funds to support three of the most vulnerable corps and communities in the northern regions of Tanzania.

This integrated project for economic empowerment is designed to help women help their families through literacy, income generating activities, health, nutrition, family planning, HIV/AIDS education, farming techniques etc.

Many of these areas are very dry and women spend an inordinate amount of time simply fetching water from whatever sources they can find. With this comes unsafe water which often causes illness.

Our project will also provide two borehole wells with clean, safe water which can service 500 – 600 families



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NEW YEAR MESSAGE (2006) FROM THE WORLD PRESIDENT OF WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

Dear Friends,

A few months ago my sister and I had the rare opportunity of meeting up with a group of our cousins, most of whom were a few years older than us. We had a wonderful time reminiscing about our childhood and youth when we used to meet more frequently. Before we realised it however, we found we were getting very nostalgic for the 'good old days' and began to make unfavourable comparisons and say that things were not as they used to be in our day. Fortunately we soon laughed at ourselves for being so negative and became much more positive as we reflected on the wonderful new things we were enjoying in this modern world.



As I thought about this afterwards I was reminded of one writer who said 'The past should be a springboard and not a hammock'.

Have you ever tried to sit in a hammock – swinging gently between two trees? I have – and it was most relaxing and enjoyable once I had mastered the art of staying on it and not falling off with the movement. A hammock is designed to make one totally relaxed and settled with a good book and a long, cool drink. It's a place for thinking of pleasant things – even to the extent of drifting off to sleep.

A springboard on the other hand is invigorating, though a bit scary. When I was young I spent ages standing on the edge of the board trying to pluck up the courage to bounce on the board to gain height and then jump into the refreshing waters of the swimming pool. I was so proud of myself once I had done this that I wanted to go back and do it over and over again. I must confess though that it is a long time since I have tried anything quite like that.

The onset of a new year should be a springboard to new opportunities – a time to try something new and to look forward with eager anticipation, expecting it to be wonderful and exhilarating.

This year will mark the beginning of a very new experience for me as I will be entering retirement at the beginning of April. I have loved my years of active service for the Lord but don't intend to just sit back, relax and reflect on the past however thrilling and rewarding it has been. I am excited at the prospect of once again picking up the hobbies I have not had time for, spending more time with my family, trying out new recipes as well as attempting new things and maybe taking up some course of studies. Not least will be the joy of having more time to spend in deepening my spiritual life and in prayer.

I am mindful of God's word to his people through the prophet Isaiah when he said:

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.

See, I am doing a new thing!

Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? (Isaiah 43:18-19 NIV)

I invite you to join me in jumping out of the relaxing hammock of nostalgia and bouncing on to the springboard of faith for the coming year so that you don't miss any of the new things God has in store for you.

God bless you!

With warmest greetings,

Freda Larsson

Commissioner

World President of Women's Ministries

**MESSAGE FROM THE TERRITORIAL PRESIDENT
OF WOMEN'S MINISTRIES**

Dear Women in Leadership,

The City of Ottawa portrays each summer in the dusk of the evening hour a light show. The back drop is the Parliament buildings which display light images of all colours, etching out the Canadian story. No doubt our Bermudian friends where sunny days light up their land of island jewel also, spotlight a picture of history, culture and beauty.



People adapt to geography from a perspective of both survival and investment finding life in the land. This Cedar Springs edition is drawing out its own theme of:

Love Your Community

What light show will emerge from these resources, with a focus on the trails of our neighbours in their landed community? The ideas presented once enacted could strike a match of mission: "light for feet seeking out pathways of hope."

Grow a branch with others into an unknown part of your corps community, and find your way with Jesus shining His light as a flashlight into hidden corners of potential.

God be with you in the journey!

Blessings,

M. Christine MacMillan
Commissioner
Territorial President of Women's Ministries

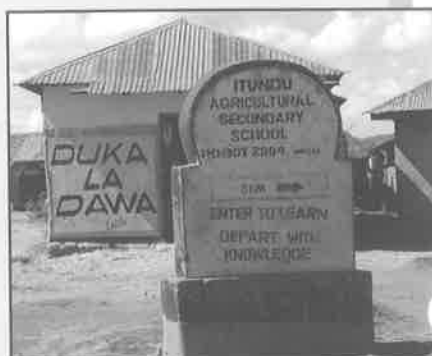
Territorial Project — 2006

The 2006 Territorial Women's Ministries Project will be supporting ministries in Tanzania and Liberia

ITUNDU SECONDARY SCHOOL, TANZANIA

Phase 2 – to enable the rebuilding of the girls' wing of the Itundu Secondary School

The number of students far outweighs the accommodation provided by classrooms and dormitories and would not be accepted in most (if any) developed country. Sometimes 100 children are accommodated in one classroom (3 to 4 children at each desk), and at present classrooms are being used as dormitories. There are few books and little equipment and the books and equipment available tend to be outdated and in very poor condition.



CATHERINE BOOTH GIRL'S HOSTEL, MONROVIA, LIBERIA

To upgrade the Catherine Booth Girl's Hostel in Monrovia, Liberia

The hostel which houses 36 girls is in deplorable condition. Only one of the four bathrooms is in operation, the windows have no drapes or screens, the beds are broken. Renovations will help to alleviate the continuous sickness of the girls from malaria which comes mainly via mosquitoes that enter the hostel because of poor screening and missing window glass. The repair of bathrooms will provide the girls with cleaner and useable bathroom facilities and will give the girls a safer and healthier environment in which to live.



CEDAR SPRINGS OF INSPIRATION EVALUATION FORM

Please return by January 31, 2006 to Major Linda Bradbury,
Women's Ministries Department, THQ

Feedback is a gift. Thank you for taking the time to send us your gift for each section of this program resource.

Name: _____

Ministry Unit (Corps/Centre): _____

Town/City: _____

In our Ministry Unit we use Cedar Springs of Inspiration:

☐ *Not at all*

☐ *Occasionally*

☐ *Regularly*

Section 1 – OUTREACH

Comments: _____

Section 2 – SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Comments: _____

Section 3 – FELLOWSHIP

Comments: _____

Section 4 – HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Comments: _____

Section 5 – PRE SCHOOL

Comments: _____

Section 6 – HOME LEAGUE

Comments: _____

Section 7 – SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Comments: _____

Section 8 – RESOURCES

Comments: _____

Section 9- PROMOTIONAL WEEK

Comments: _____



Help for Victims of Domestic Violence

Every year, thousands of women seek safety in domestic violence shelters. But reaching out spiritually to shelter residents takes sensitivity. Most shelters are secular. Staff may be wary of any help that suggests spiritual overtones. Still, there are plenty of ways to serve the women and children in your local shelter.

- Most shelters couldn't stay open without volunteers. As you **offer your time and skills**, you will encounter opportunities to encourage believers and model Christian love to nonbelievers.
- Shelters usually welcome **donations** — clothing, toiletries, toys, books. Ask about their specific needs. Some shelters have small libraries and may accept Christian books.
- **Give a boost** to a victim's self-esteem. If you are able to cut and style hair or give manicures, you can help victims feel a little better about themselves. Your shelter may also let you teach a skills course, such as household management or parenting.
- It's especially hard to be in a shelter on special days. **Throw a birthday or**

special occasion party for the kids and their moms. A cake and a small gift make a birthday special, a religious holiday provides opportunities to express God's love in direct ways.

- **Pray for the women, children, and staff.** The sad-eyed young woman needs a job. The little boy sucking his thumb needs a godly male role model. Your prayers can move mountains for people in need, and those who work so hard to help them.
- **Get informed** about domestic violence. Some people imply that victims are responsible for the violence and must be self-destructive to stay. Learn enough about the dynamics of abuse to politely yet firmly enlighten those who think that way. Be prepared for the moment when a victim turns to you for help. Ask your local agency for information on how to support a victim, or call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at (800)199-SAFE.



Kid-Z-Own

Angela Bradbury, Yorkwoods, Toronto



Name of Group	Kid-Z-Own
Type of Group	After school program
Aim(s) of Group	The program aims to serve the community. It seeks to help kids with all around life skills and bring people of various backgrounds together.
Target Group	Kids ages 6-12 base group of 20, but size of group dependent on space and leadership.
Main focus of Group	Provide a positive and stable environment that builds self esteem and shares the love of Christ.
Secondary Focus	A safe place to have fun
Duration of Program	Monday-Friday, 3:30 to 6:00 p.m. during school year. Summer schedule varies, first year ran for 7 weeks. Monday-Friday 1:00-4:00 p.m.
Outline of Program	Snack, homework, bible lesson, games/computer/art/ other various activities
Cost for Participants	Fees based on parent's income \$5.00-\$10.00 weekly. Some kids are free.
Leadership	1 employee working with corps officer's guidance
Support Personnel	At least 1-2 moms volunteer a day. This depends on size of group.
Equipment	Depends on program, we use computers, art supplies, gym equipment for sports, various games, table hockey.
Resources	Family Services provide snacks. Local Police support with donations and volunteers. Also, we engage community and church volunteers.
Possible related Activities	Kids Club, Pioneers
Anticipated Results	We hope to have an impact on both the children and their families. We want to encourage a child's development spiritually, socially and intellectually.

Helping Hands to Women in Nursing Homes

Do you know how to give a basic manicure? If so, you have a great opportunity for outreach to women.

You'll need manicure supplies: bright polish, rubber gloves, polish remover, fragrant hand lotion, cotton balls, and so on. You'll also need permission from the nursing home. Call the activity director, explain that you'd like to visit a few women and give them manicures, find out what day works best, and then show up with a smile and a listening ear. Have someone demonstrate to the group of volunteers how to give a manicure. Let each woman choose her polish.

As you rub lotion on a woman's hand or



polish her nails, inquire about her family and friends. She will enjoy your attention and will appreciate the pampering.

When you are finished, be sure to tell her how much you enjoyed the visit. Leave behind a little note or a blank card on which you've written I had a nice time today, an encouraging bible verse, and your name. If you can visit again, make a date to do so, and write that on the card. If you have daughters, enlist them on your team. As you meet with your nursing-home residents look for natural ways to talk about Christ and share His love.

Ideas for Encouraging the Unemployed

- **Inform them of employment possibilities,** but don't make them feel they must jump at the opportunity. Let them know you realize the opening may not fit their gifts and goals. This takes the pressure off them should the job be a poor fit.



- **Affirm their self-worth and abilities.** We live in a world that often judges a person based upon what he does for a

living. It's a terrible blow to one's ego to be unemployed.

- **Ask about their job search,** show concern by remembering the unemployed in prayer. Don't let the topic of unemployment dominate every conversation.
- **Don't judge** a person's reasons for leaving a previous job. Believe the best.
- **Plan social activities** with unemployed friends. Make it affordable even for their restricted budgets.

How to Help Crime Victims

Victims of crime need to regain a sense of security and control. In addition to supportive listening, there are practical ways the church/corps can help.

- **Property repair and cleanup.** A burglary victim may have difficulty cleaning up afterward. Everything the burglar touched may feel *tainted*. You can help by taking the initiative to put things back in order, with the victim's approval. But don't be intrusive by rearranging furniture and sorting through drawers, for example — without asking permission.
- **Emergency assistance.** Taking meals to a crime victim means a lot, even if the person doesn't feel like eating much right away. Prepare something that can be frozen.
- **Victims may also need to replace lost or broken items.** Check with church members or neighbours for help in locating needed items.
- **Temporary or permanent relocation.** Help them locate a new home — or raise funds for them to stay in a motel for a while, if needed.
- **Local transportation.** Offer rides to the doctor's office, the grocery store, the police station.
- **Document replacement or insurance forms.** Sometimes crime victims are in a state of shock and confusion and need help cancelling stolen credit cards or thinking through information for insurance companies.
- **Child care.** Helping to take care of young children can alleviate some of the victim's stress. Take them out for a fun day at the park or invite them over for a meal.
- **Service agencies or support groups.** Help to identify any services in your community that offer assistance to crime victims.



- **Security measures.** Help the victim feel safer by putting in new locks or adding other safety precautions.
- **Medical assistance.** If there is a physical injury, encourage the victim to seek medical assistance immediately.

When you talk to a crime victim, don't just say, *let me know if you need anything*. Most people find it hard to ask for help. After a crisis, many people have trouble even thinking of what they might need.

When the World Moves Next Door

Your new neighbours are also new to your country. Their culture (and possibly their faith) are very different from yours. You want to build bridges and introduce your neighbours to your God, who loves them. Bear in mind these principles.

➤ **Remember that you are dealing with individuals.** Don't assume you know what a person believes — let her tell you in her own words. A person may belong to a particular faith because of cultural or family background but have no personal commitment to or understanding of that faith. Save time, trouble and misunderstanding by listening before speaking.

➤ **Become familiar with resources for interfaith witnessing.** It is impossible to know everything about every religion, but you can at least know where to find such information when needed. Two excellent resources are *Another Gospel* by Ruth Tucker and *Christianity for Skeptics* by Steve Kumar available through your Bible Book Store.

➤ **Develop a common understanding of terms.** Nothing frightens Hindus more than the threat of eternal life. The religion of Islam assigns three different identities to Jesus Christ. Be sure that your terms are understood.

➤ **Avoid arguments.** Conversion is a spiritual process, not only an intellectual one. Remain respectful of a person's right to disagree with you, even if you are sure she is wrong. However, don't hesitate to present your position in a non-threatening manner.

➤ **Acknowledge the strengths of other faiths.** Admitting that Jehovah's Witnesses are committed to sharing their faith or that Mormon Family Home Evening is a good idea does not take away from the truth of the gospel. Rather, it can build bridges for communication.

➤ **Demonstrate sincerity.** For many people, their religion is closely linked to their culture and family. To accept Christ would mean losing family and friends. Let new converts know by actions as well as words that you will stick by them and that the church will become their spiritual family. Allow them time to consider the cost of conversion in these terms.



➤ **Know what you believe and be able to explain it intelligently.** Earning the right to share the gospel with a person of another faith is not enough if we can't tell how to come into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Participate in evangelism training offered through your church and practice sharing your faith with other Christians so you can always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. 1 Peter 3:15.

Red Cap

Donna Barthau, Yorkminster, Toronto

A program designed for schools/churches to focus on helping children learn about and how to manage aggressive emotions that could be harmful to themselves and others



Name of Group Red Cap
Type of Group Children's Anger Management
Aim(s) of Group To learn about anger, feelings, triggers/switches, positive healthy choices and how to avoid/react to stimuli coming at you

Target Group Grades 3–6, with 6-12 children in each session

Main focus of Group Mental/emotional/behavioural health

Secondary Focus Self-Esteem, better self-understanding

Duration of Program 8 weeks

Outline of Program

- Outline (basic elements)
 - Behavioural Guidelines & Discipline – 1-2-3 Out principle.
 - Understanding emotions/feelings
 - STOP routine
 - 3 steps: I have anger
 - I have choices
 - I can make the right choices
 - CAP – Cap Anger Positively – Poem: I Will Not Fight with you today
 - Cool Off / Taking responsibility for your own mistakes
 - What is behind/under our anger
 - Review/conclude/prayer for Graduation
- Art/craft, games, and role plays used throughout course
- Incentive prizes/awards for listening and participation each week
- Meal/lunch provided: Pizza, KFC, Kraft dinner, hot dogs, sloppy joes, McDonalds
- Graduation 8th week
 - Parents/guardians, teachers and former Red Cap members are invited
 - Role play/commercial for Red Cap presented
 - Main topics reviewed, S.T.O.P.
 - A red cap, baseball, with logo presented – their art work, video of teaching and role plays, and certificate handed out to each graduate



Cost for Participants	None
Leadership	Facilitator and trained group leaders (1 for every 4 children)
Support Personnel	Shadows – those in training with leader, video technician to tape teaching, role plays
Equipment	Crayons, paper, basketball, whistle
Resources	Red Cap CAP – Capping Anger Positively Manual available from Corps Ministries Dept. THQ
Possible related Activities	Invitation to youth group, further socialization, possible attachment to corps
Anticipated Results	Conflict resolution enhanced. Using skills, understanding of anger management at home, school, sports and with friends/on playground.



I Will Not Fight With You Today



I will not fight with you today.

STOP

No I won't, I'll only say
"I do feel mad, that's okay,

THINK

We'll work it out another way.

If I feel my anger rise,
I'll push the urge to hurt aside.

OUT TIME

I can think and use my mind,
And leave all violence far behind.

PRACTICE POSITIVE CHOICES



Fill a Bag with Help

His hand-printed sign read *Homeless and Hungry. Please help*. He looked at the cross dangling from the rear-view mirror. His eyes revealed expectation that there would be help.

The light changed to green, and I drove on. I thought of the large bills I carried and the small change. I thought of the tracts I carried that would be meaningless without some offer of physical help. As I drove away, I asked God to show me how to help the next homeless person I encountered. God answered my prayer with a plan.

I cleared the pantry and stocked the shelves with ready-to-bag items that would be useful to a homeless person. I filled a grocery bag and put it in my car within ready reach, so I could hand it out the window at a moment's notice. Once I gave that bag away, I replaced it with another. To fill the bags, I assembled the following items.

Non-perishable foods. Supermarkets sell small cans of food sealed with pop-top lids. These include soups, spaghetti, pork and beans, fruits, stews, canned meats, tuna, sausages, and puddings. I also filled plastic zipper bags with crackers, vanilla wafers, pretzels, cookies, bags of peanuts, cheese crackers, peanut butter crackers, and chips. Finally, I gathered several small bottles of water.

Toiletries and other non-foods. I bought soap, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, plastic eating utensils, and paper towels. I also filled several envelopes with dollar bills and quarters.

Spiritual and practical resources. I gathered tracts with the plan of salvation, small bible



portions, and the Gospel of John. I included a list of local centers that offer food, shelter, and job assistance. While some of the people I encounter could be called professional beggars, I don't know who they are. I can't judge others or their motives. As Jesus said in Mt. 25:40, I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.

A True Story

Jim and Sheryl, a newly married couple living on a limited budget were driving one day along a busy street when a tall red-headed man approached them with an empty gas can. *I'm stranded. Could you spare \$5 so I could get gas?* he asked. *If you'll give me your address I'll send it back to you.*

Of course, Sheryl said. *You may need a few more dollars. Here's a ten. Good luck!*

Jim rolled his eyes but Sheryl shrugged, *He needed help.*

A week later, Jim was reading the paper over breakfast when he burst out laughing. Apparently a tall red-headed man had been arrested for approaching people with an empty gas can and asking for \$5. It was a scam. The

police found 28 five dollar bills in his pocket and one ten dollar bill. Jim laughed. *The ten might as well have had your name on it*, he told Sheryl. *That's what you get for giving money to everyone with a sob story.*

Was Sheryl wrong? I don't think so. Sure, she was victimized by a clever crook. But what's the alternative? Should we let conscienceless free loaders harden our hearts to pleas for help?

The downside risk of being taken occasionally is vastly outweighed by the risk

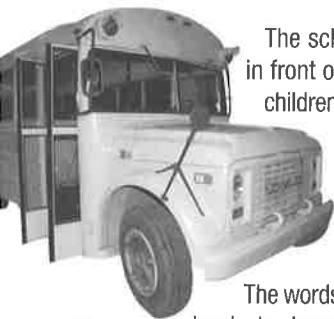
that, in our cynicism, we will turn our backs on someone who is truly in need. I'd rather be **wrong** than heartless.

The day we stop helping one another in order to guarantee not being taken advantage of is the day that EVIL WINS. Of course our kindness will keep cons and cheats in business, but we can live with that. When our motives are pure, we should be able to live with the embarrassment of being taken. What we can't accept is a society where caring and compassion shrivel under our suspicions. It's better to err on the side of mercy.

Bus Stops and Bibles

Discover how God can use 15 minutes a day of your time to start the seed of evangelism in the lives of young children, with permission.

It all started with one mother who wanted to have prayer and bible study with her children each day before they left for school. Sounds simple, right? Well, it became complicated.



The school-bus stop was right in front of her house. Many of the children from the neighbourhood arrived at the bus stop early because both their parents had to leave for work.

The words, *great distraction* barely begin to describe what happened to our family devotions once other children gathered outside. Soon, the neighbourhood children were asking to hear the bible stories this mother was reading to her kids. They were instructed to get permission from their parents.

It happened faster than the speed of light.

The next question this mother asked was *how do I do it in 15 minutes?*

Some very basic principles. Keep it simple. Keep it consistent. Pray for each one. Each school day, the neighbourhood children heard a five-minute bible story. Then prayer was offered for five minutes. If there was any time left before the school bus arrived they sang.

In the 6 years since the Bus-Stop Ministry was launched, two boys and two mothers have come to know Christ through this simple outreach. Other children as they grew older started a bible study in their elementary and high school. Students heard the gospel and some accepted Christ.

Forty children have come and gone through her home. She may never know the full effect of those simple bible lessons. What she knows with certainty is that God can do marvellous things with 15 minutes each day.



How to Help Someone

Who's Had A Miscarriage

Ministering to The Individual

When someone has miscarried, lay aside your reluctance and your fear to get involved and allow God to use you. Several things to remember:

➤ **She lost a baby.** When we grasp that miscarriage is truly the loss of a beloved child, comforting the grieving parents takes on a new perspective. God's Word is clear. Even in extreme immaturity, a miscarried baby is still a child, and to God, a beloved, planned human being. Not just a lump of tissue, he or she is an eternal being, created, and intimately known by Almighty God. Ps. 139:13-16 and Jer. 1:5.

The most poignant example of this truth is the story of Jesus and John the Baptist in Lk. 1:39-45. John, then a six-month-old fetus, *leaped for joy* in the presence of God with us, even though Jesus' tiny body had been conceived only days before. And Elizabeth called Mary the mother of my Lord before anyone could tell Mary was pregnant.

➤ **Miscarriage is not an illness.** It is a death in the family. When a friend miscarries, serve the person just as you would if she had experienced the death of any other family member. Bring dinner. Send a sympathy card. Call. Call again the next day and the next week. Send flowers. Remind her of

the hope expressed in 2 Sam. 12:23 by King David. Mourning the death of his baby son, he said, I will go to him. Won't it be amazing to one day meet and get to know this child in heaven?

➤ **Love in deed as well as words.** Be sensitive to the person's needs. Remember, she's still postpartum but with empty arms. Touch. Hug. To be held and allowed to cry is a priceless gift. Listen. Weep with her instead of judging that she is making too big a deal of the loss.

Pass along a short book that explains the hope God's Word gives us for these children, such as *I'll Hold You in Heaven* (Regal Publishers) by Jack Hayford. Available through your Bible Book Store.

➤ **Pray, and then pray some more.** Only God can heal broken hearts. Praying daily for the person is one of the best gifts to give.

➤ **Be careful not to wound further with careless words.** Avoid attitudes and statements such as It was only a miscarriage, or You can always have another baby. Remember, reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing Prov. 12:18. Do talk about the baby and the baby's death, just as you would if it were another child in the family. Accept her angry questions and whys. Don't slough off her pain with pat answers, but steadfastly point her back to the Healer.

➤ **Encourage a memorial.** Those grieving a child lost through miscarriage know the

extra pain of having to combine hellos and good-byes. They have no memories, photos, or even a grave to cry beside.

➤ **Remember that grief can take a long time.** Denial, bargaining, anger, and depression are all part of the normal grief process. Each person feels and expresses these steps uniquely. Grieving normally varies in intensity and length among different members of the family. Give them time to grieve, even when it takes longer than you'd expected. Listen and weep with them after everyone else forgets.



➤ **Listening and Loving.** Treating the miscarriage like a death, not an illness, affirms the child's life and profoundly impacts the family. It's an awesome privilege to listen and love during a mother's grief. Hugs and understanding can be instruments of healing in the Father's hands.



Lord of the Dance

Corinne Cameron, High Point, Victoria, BC

Name of Group	Lord of the Dance
Type of Group	After School Outreach
Aim(s) of Group	To bridge church and community
Target Group	Teens, adults, women, children
Main focus of Group	To build self esteem, through dance skills and inter-personal relationships
Secondary Focus	Enhance the experience of worship
Duration of Program	September - June
Outline of Program	Schedule of classes for different age groups. Christian music is used throughout
Cost for Participants	No cost
Leadership	Christian teacher from University of Victoria is a volunteer instructor
Support Personnel	Corps Officer
Equipment	Small room with hardwood floors Ballet beams and mirrors
Possible related Activities	Intergenerational mentoring
Anticipated Results	Bridging church and community. Unique relationships formed as moms wait for their children. Barriers broken down between generations. New freedom in worship. New people in worship. New believers.



Helping the Afflicted



Those with AIDS need God's comfort, our compassion, and generous doses of practical help. Here are ways to relate to the AIDS sufferers in your neighbourhood or workplace.

Research the disease

Knowing what to expect before you reach out to someone with AIDS helps both you and the patient. Most AIDS sufferers are well informed and will also pass along what they've learned — if they're not too sick to do so. Listen politely.

Ask how to help

Suggest aid based on your interests and abilities as well as needs you observe. You might walk your friend's dog daily or help write letters. Driving to doctor's appointments can provide a way to get better acquainted. One patient said, *I'm able to open up in the car where I know no one else is listening.*

Compassionate listening

Eventually your friend may want to tell you frank details about the disease process. He may want to remember out loud different aspects of the life he's lived. Avoid reacting harshly or judgmentally. To help patients work through grief, listen compassionately to details about friends or a partner who died of the disease.

Build trust

AIDS patients may avoid strangers, fearing condemnation instead of compassion. Humbly show the love of Christ. Think along these lines: *What if my besetting sin came with a death sentence?*

Overcome fear

AIDS is not transferred through casual contact. Initiate physical interaction, such as a touch on the shoulder, a handshake, or a hug. Ask God to help you come to feel at ease as you overcome fears.

Feelings of loneliness

God may put you in an individual's life as a surrogate mother, father, sister, or brother — especially if your friend has been rejected by family members because of promiscuity or drug use.

As you let the light of Christ shine through you, your friend will ask questions about your life. You may hear, *Why are you helping me?* or *Why are you such a joyful person?* Always be ready to give the reason for the hope that's in you (1 Pet 3:15). You may be the first — or last — person to share Christ with this man or woman with AIDS. Remember always that God loves them as much as He loves you.



Serve Your Local School

Creative and effective ideas to reach out and serve the local school in your community.

Confrontations between Christians and public school systems are often in the news. We admire those courageous ones who face the issues head on. But what if we aren't the confrontational type? Is there anything we can do to influence our public schools for the good?

- **Pray for administrators, teachers, students, and parents by name.** *Mothers Who Care* is a group committed to praying for children, schools, and communities. For information about them, email <http://www.ChristianWomentoday.com>
- **Volunteer in the school setting** to allow others to see Christ in you. Tutor, decorate classrooms at the start of the semester, coach, help in the office or library, chaperone field trips, be a teacher assistant.
- **Write letters to the administration**, praising them for things they are doing well or for their strong moral values. Also write to express concerns or observations.
- **Invest your prayers or finances** in someone with a ministry to students or faculty. Ask them if there are practical ways you can serve them and their ministry.
- **Take coffee cake or donuts to the teachers' lounge** along with a thank

- you note to encourage the educators.
- **Help your children reach out to classmates.** Teach them how to communicate their faith in Christ. Help them incorporate what they believe into their school projects and speeches.



- **Open your home to gatherings for students, teachers, or administrators.** Youth workers often need a place to hold meetings and would be encouraged to have your support.
- **Donate books** to the school library.

How to Talk to Generation X



Has all the media hype scared you from sharing Christ with a Generation Xer? Are you intimidated by labels such as lost generation and slackers?

Like previous generations, Generation Xers are trying to make sense out of the world. Their hearts carry the same longing for something big enough to give their life to.

So talk to a Generation Xer about Christ — with these basics in mind.

- **Relax.** Don't worry about speaking their language or fitting into their culture. They want you to try to understand them, not mimic them.
- **Listen.** Many Generation Xers lack an older adult or mentor who will take time to hear what they are going through, appreciate the difficulty of their situation, and reassure them. Listening is the easiest way to gain their trust and assure them that you care.
- **Be vulnerable.** Talk about your life and struggles. This generation is particularly cautious about authority. They would rather learn from practical examples of how you handled a situation than be told what to do.
- **Tell stories.** Along with stories from your life, use the great stories of the bible to illustrate principles. Personal examples reach this generation best, and there are hundreds of examples in the bible of real



life to draw from.

- **Tackle tough issues.** Generation Xers thrive on addressing difficult issues. Discussing how their faith and the Christian faith interact with the issues of the day is a powerful tool. If you don't know the answers, say so. But be willing to engage tough topics honestly.



Connections Café

Bringing people together, rich and poor alike to sit down and share a meal as part of the family of God in a unique wholesome setting.

A Corps/Church in Canada has entered the food business. On Sunday nights, the fellowship hall becomes a restaurant where those who can't afford to eat out dine alongside those who can. Connections Café has tablecloths, flowers, a menu, wait staff, and occasional entertainment. No one is allowed to pay for a meal.

Designated leaders or members of the church, take turns cooking, waiting tables, and decorating. Volunteers deliver food donated by stores and restaurants. Additional food is purchased from community food banks.

Donations come from people who hear about Connections Café and want to help.

Menus include a selection of appetizers, a choice of two entrees, one pasta, one meat, and dessert. The cook fixes whatever food is

available. Often corps families will prepare and donate favourite meals.

Word of mouth advertising and a sign at the corps bring between 120 and 150 people each Sunday. When the church discovered that younger guests needed help with homework, they extended Connections Café to Tuesday

**Rich and poor
alike sit down
and share a meal
as part of the
family of God**



nights and offered kid-friendly food, usually pizza. Honour students from nearby schools serve as tutors.

It has proven to be an incredible experience for all. Relationships within the corps/church have been strengthened and newcomers have started attending worship.



You've read oodles of articles and heard scads of sermons about sharing Christ with your neighbours. But you're still stuck at square one. You have no idea how to *meet* your neighbours. Try these ideas.

➤ **Start simply.** Borrow a cup of sugar or a hammer, ask advice, or offer to help your neighbour move something heavy, change a tire, etc.

➤ **Be visible.** Don't hide in your fenced-in back yard. Sit on your porch or balcony. Wash your car in the driveway. Play croquet in your front yard. Make it easier for your neighbours to meet you.



➤ **Overplant your garden,** especially if your neighbours don't have gardens. You'll soon have tomatoes to share all up and down your street.

➤ **Organize a neighbourhood garage sale.** So no one feels pressured, leave flyers on doorsteps, inviting people to call you if they're interested. Plan a potluck dinner for after the sale.

➤ **Throw a block party.** Hold an Easter egg hunt or go Christmas carolling. Neither of these require a lot of time or expense — dyed eggs (require each family to bring six) coffee, juice, and donuts for the egg hunt; song sheets, hot chocolate or cider, and Christmas cookies, again, make a plate of cookies the price of admission for the carolling. As with the garage sale, get the word out through flyers.

➤ **Organize a neighbourhood watch program or babysitting cooperative.** Not only will you meet your neighbours, but you'll have natural opportunities for continued, frequent contact.

Meals, Maps, and Moms

Some new mothers are surrounded by family or friends who devote many hours of supportive care. What about those not so fortunate? One corps came up with a creative idea. Free meals and housecleaning service to new, exhausted moms.

An announcement invited interested corps/church members to attend a planning and strategy session. Their ideas were brought to the table. From that a long list of simple menus was established. Corps/Church members volunteered to be on cooking duty each day.

The key was to identify mothers in need.

When a new mom-in-need was identified, volunteer members went into action. They brought their meals to the corps on designated evenings. The meals were quickly delivered to the mom by volunteers. The goal was to get

one to two weeks of dinners to the home.

The young adults in the church pitched in for the next step. They arranged for two cleanings of the new mom's home. They were divided into groups of three and given basic training in housecleaning. They were linked up with supports, retired women and men who wanted to get in on the action. They were able to work quickly and efficiently with their coaches, taking no more than a couple of hours to do a complete job.



At no point did the church imply that worship attendance ought to follow as reciprocation for their kindness. They just offered a cheery, expert service to people with a special need.

Good News on Napkins

Restaurant evangelism

During the meal or while saying grace, pray for your server, by name if they are wearing a nametag. Before leaving the table, write a personal note on a clean paper napkin, addressing the server by name.

Begin the note with thanks for the service received. In a few sentences, introduce the server to the greatest Servant who ever lived. Take a little time to learn how to present the basic gospel message in a paragraph. If the server seems to be having a frustrating day,

tailor the message accordingly, telling how life in Christ provides peace in the heart no matter what the circumstances. Build upon something the server mentioned in casual conversation. Leave the note on the table along with a generous tip.

This takes a few extra minutes at the end of our meal, but it is amazing how many busy servers stop and read the notes as they retrieve their tips. Through this practice you are better able to remember servers' names, so you can greet them when you return to the same restaurant. In an impersonal world, such gestures can make an eternal difference.



Mercy in a Minute

When I think of mercy I think of The Salvation Army Community Care groups across our country.

While we can't all perform heroic acts of mercy, we can all practice compassion in small ways. For example:

- The next time someone shares a hurt with you, don't just say, *I'll pray for you*. Take them aside right then and pray for them.
- Whenever you write a check to that missionary you support, take time to write a newsy postcard. Your money is important, but so is your caring.
- Inquire at a local nursing home about patients who never receive visitors. Visit once a month. Take along a book of short stories, a magazine, or a newspaper, and read to them.



we can't
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pressure of an overwhelming to-do-list.

- Is a friend's car out of commission? Take her with you for a morning of running errands, run her errands, not just yours, then treat her to lunch. When circumstances

- The next time a friend visits you because she needs to talk, turn on the answering machine and ignore the phone. Your uninterrupted attention says, *You're important to me*.
- While you're raking your leaves, rake your neighbour's as well. You might be easing the

are working against us, it's nice to know people are for us.

- Watch for people at church who stand alone after the service, or otherwise look lonely. Introduce yourself. Make a time to meet them for coffee and donuts on the following Sunday.

When Someone You Know Is Dying

The first impulse with terminally ill people is to avoid them. It's because most people don't know what to do or say. Use the following suggestions to serve the dying.

➤ **Encourage reminiscing.**

Turn the focus toward warm memories and away from present pain. Just a few leading questions can release an avalanche of recollections.

➤ **Offer to pray aloud.** Pray for relief from pain for the sufferer. Pray that loved ones and medical professionals will know how to administer the best possible care. Ask

God to make His presence known to the one who is ill. Underscore the assurance that for every follower of Jesus heaven follows death.

➤ **Stand by them.** Offer to come by daily, if only to say hello and sit with the patient for a short time. Don't disappear when things get toughest.

➤ **Bring goodies.** Come prepared with paper, stamps, and a pen, then offer to write letters. If hospital regulations permit, bring their favourite food. Bring a newspaper or a favourite magazine and



read aloud some of the articles.

➤ **Be real.** Don't offer false assurances. You'll get better soon, but instead talk about how they've impacted your life. Assurance that his or her life has been meaningful and productive will hold more value than shallow pleasantries.

➤ **Touch them.** A pat on the arm will convey how much you care.

➤ **Read the Bible.** Ask them what they want to hear rather than presuming you know what they need to hear.



Transformed Communities

When racial and ethnic groups live in isolation from one another, the hope for true community is dim. We can help transform our communities by taking small steps of friendship toward people whose race or culture differ from our own.

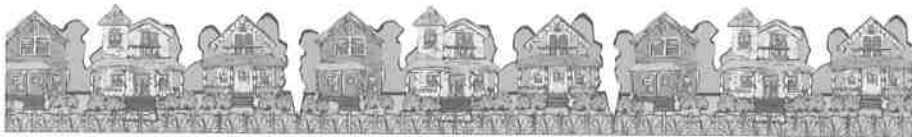


- Visit ethnic areas of cities you visit or live near. While exploring new neighborhoods, shop at local stores, visit a local church, meet the people. Observe and make notes about what is unique.
- Have a joint worship service, community sing, or picnic with a congregation whose members are predominantly of another race.
- Volunteer alongside people of a different race to work in ministries or organize local events. If they are believers, spend time in prayer and fellowship.
- Look for inter-racial projects for your small



group to participate in.

- Ask people of another race or ethnic background to tell you about their heritage, holidays, music, and language. Ask questions.
- Subscribe to a magazine for people of a different race. Learn what the issues are, how the people think and live.
- Invite pastors of other-race corps/churches to speak in your church, address a fellowship meeting, or lead worship.
- If you have had a negative racial encounter, resolve that you'll not allow that one experience to influence future relationships with others of that race. Keep reaching out.
- Start an inter-racial prayer group in your area. Share your experiences, talk about how to encourage each other in your walk with Christ, and pray for reconciliation.



Piecemakers

Edie Giles and Velma Volz

Name of Group	Piecemakers
Type of Group	Quilting, sewing, crocheting, knitting and other work.
Aim(s) of Group	To provide fellowship. To teach quilting techniques. To provide a spiritual atmosphere. To raise funds for missions.
Target Group	Women from the corps and community needing fellowship.
Main focus of Group	Fellowship, Worship
Secondary Focus	Education, Outreach
Duration of Program	5 hours during the day, once a week (drop-in between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm)
Outline of Program	<p>Brown bag lunch</p> <p>Toonie lunch once a month (These funds are used for any community projects that we may be working on).</p> <p>Devotional on a rotation basis</p> <p>Activities such as quilting, handwork, or a lesson on a new technique.</p> <p>Quilt-a-thon (12 hours) held in September or October.</p> <p>Funds raised from this event have been sent to the Territorial Project in the past.</p> <p>Making Caring Covers for neo-natal unit and nursing homes.</p> <p>Bibs and walker bags for nursing homes.</p>
Cost for Participants	\$1.00 per week
Leadership	A five person planning team. Ladies who are creative, organized with people skills
Support Personnel	A Treasurer, Tea Hostess, Chaplain, Office Secretary
Equipment	Rotary cutting mats and rulers. Individual tables for sewing machines. Blocks to raise cutting tables. Ironing boards and irons
Resources	Local quilt shops. Books and magazines. Local quilting teachers. Experience of ladies within the group.
Possible related Activities	Quilt-a-thon. Visit to the recipients of Caring Covers, bibs and bags. Visits to quilt shops. Annual Christmas Sale. Bus trip to a festival, dinner theatre
Anticipated Results	Spiritual Growth. Relationship Building through community.



Spiritual Formation

Adapted for Cedar Springs by Linda Bradbury

The basic tool for the development of spiritual formation groups is a resource from the Book *Spiritual Formation* by James Bryan Smith.

The goal is to provide small groups within the church with a practical, balanced and effective strategy for spiritual growth and enrichment. Spiritual formation groups are an indispensable tool for developing committed followers of Jesus Christ in the 21st Century.

How does this group aid spiritual development?
The secret is in 3 important ingredients:

- **Balance**

To be healthy spiritually, we need balance, just as our physical body needs balance in diet and exercise.

- **Knowledge**

Many do not become disciples of Jesus for one reason: lack of information about how to do the spiritual disciplines. What in fact do we actually do to grow closer to God? This resource provides that knowledge, what to do and how to do it.

- **Mutual Encouragement and Accountability**

This is perhaps the hardest part of discipleship. Ingrained habits hamper us from changing the way we are. The secret to breaking these ingrained habits is the strength found in joining forces with others who have a similar mission. The group provides the encouragement to start and the accountability to keep going.

- Each gathering lasts between 60 to 90 minutes.
- One person is designated to be that weeks leader.
- The leader guides the group through a series of opening words, a question and answer sharing session and closing prayer.
- Within this flexible format, members are reminded of their task, they hear from each other and discuss their journey with each other. It is within this framework that balance, knowledge, encouragement and accountability are nurtured.

Starting a group:

- Pray and ask the Lord for guidance
- Find one other person
- Invite others to join
- Keep group from 2 – 7 for best results.

There are eight sessions:

- Discovering a balanced vision of Christian faith and practices
- Practising the prayer filled life.
- Practising the virtuous life.
- Practising the Spirit-empowered life.
- Practising the compassionate life.
- Practising the Word-centred life.
- Practising the sacramental life.
- Embodying Christ's presence.
- Practising a practical strategy for spiritual growth, the formation of a group.

This is an excellent, theologically sound and effective small group strategy for new or seasoned people, to grow closer to God and one another.

How does this group work?

- From 2-7 people can gather regularly to plan discipling activities for the week ahead.

For further information about this book contact Women's Ministries Department, THQ.



It is a privilege to praise God, and all of us can think of reasons to praise Him. Essentially, praise is the heartfelt acknowledgement of God's wondrous qualities. First, look at the list below and choose that quality which most inspires you to praise Him. Ask yourself how it makes you feel knowing that

God has the quality you have chosen. How does this affect your daily life? Your relationship with God?

Write a short prayer below based on your thoughts. You will be sharing your prayer with the group.

Holy	Sovereign	Omniscient, all-knowing
Creator	Incomprehensible	Compassionate
Radiant in Glory	Forgiving	Slow to anger
Majestic	Unconditional Love	Omnipotent, all-powerful
Counsellor	Generous	Omnipresent, eternally present
Living Word	Bread of Life	Healer
Just Judge	Faithful	Righteous
Guide	Champion	Ever present Help
Trustworthy	Unchanging	Protector
Merciful	Good Shepherd	Warrior
Prince of Peace	All Seeing	Strong
Deliverer	Abba Father	Incorruptible
Mighty to Save	Purifier	Covenant Keeper
Intercessor	Immanuel, always with us	

Hands in Touch with God

My Private House Of Prayer - adapted from Leslie Weatherhead's book by same name by Linda Bradbury.

Introduction:

Every Christian recognizes that prayer is essential. We must admit that it comes easier to some than others but we cannot leave praying to those who seem to have a bent for it. Some of us need a method to get/keep us on track. Based on Matthew 6:6 God gave the following exercise to Leslie Weatherhead and we can use it as our practical exercise.

Matt 6:6 *But when you pray go into your room....*

Weatherhead wondered at Jesus giving that kind of advice to people who lived in one room houses. It did not make sense! One day the answer came. It was so simple that it made him laugh. Jesus was talking about an imaginary room to pray.

If, then, the room was imaginary, Weatherhead felt he could have as many rooms as he liked, to visit as often as he wanted and stay in each room as long as he needed. From this enlightenment came the following ideas.

You can enter His house of prayer whenever and wherever. You can enter any or all of them as you sit in a bus, or even without getting out of bed. By using this method you can give as long or as short a time as you wish to prayer. Do not rush through all the rooms looking for God. He is found in every one. Some may desire to use some rooms in the morning and leave others - particularly the sixth and seventh - for the evening. Some may have so little time that they can only use one room per day. Do what works best.

ROOM #1 THE AFFIRMATION OF THE DIVINE PRESENCE

A common objection to prayer is that it *feels like talking to nothing* or that *there is no one there*. We cannot engineer feeling. In this first room let us affirm/declare the presence of God. This we can do by repeating some of the great texts of the Bible:

Isaiah 41:10,13,14. Isaiah 43:1-3, 5.

Matthew 28:20. John 14:18.

Revelation 21:3. Psalm 46:1-11.

Genesis 28:13, 15-17.



With such verses that affirm God's presence, we furnish this room and, of course, we can add to them from the song book or the poets.

Song: SASB 59, TB 220 *I know Thee Who Thou Art.*

ROOM #2 ADORATION, PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

When we have reminded ourselves of the reality of the presence of God, we can pass into the next room in which we praise, give thanks and adore. Imagine this room full of morning sunshine. We can furnish it with songs, choruses, psalms and prayers from our own heart.

A suggested song would be: *As the Deer Pants for the Water*, from Maranatha Praise

ROOM #3 CONFESSION, FORGIVENESS AND UNLOADING

Now we are ready for a room that seems rather dim and shadowy as we enter — but brightens as we move across it. It is the room for confession, forgiveness and unloading.

Here we confess our sin, not just in a general way but being honest and specific.

We each have moments when we are jealous, malicious, unkind, irritable, proud, intolerant, impure, or in some way fall short of what God calls us to be.



God is always willing and ready to forgive. Following confession, we can move towards the window, pull up the blind, and let the streaming light of loving forgiveness flood the room.

In this room part of Psalm 51 would be a suitable piece of furniture or The Lord's Prayer.

Suggested chorus: SASB Chorus #72 *If on My Soul*.

Here we also confess our fears and put down our worries and our anxieties. We also share our confusion, our bewilderment, our hurt, we tell God about everything that troubles us.

ROOM #4 POSITIVE AFFIRMATION AND RECEPTION

Cleansed by forgiveness we are now ready to receive. This room is very important. We are no longer to dwell on the depths to which we have fallen, but on to the heights to which God will lead us.

Suitable furniture for this room might be: Psalm 23. 1 John 1:9. Mark 11:24. And the song *No not despairingly come I to Thee* SASB #296 TB 191.

ROOM #5 PETITION

This is the place for purified desire and sincere petition. We all know what our dominant desires are. In this room we purify them by examining them in

the light of God's presence.

Suggested song: *Give Me a Holy Life* SASB #416, TB 192 or the prayer of Eph 3:16-19 will provide furnishings for this room.

ROOM #6 INTERCESSION

Room 6 is *intercession for others*. Sometimes our list for intercessory prayer is so long that the exercise becomes cumbersome. We tell the Lord unnecessary details and then we even give Him direction as to how to answer our prayers. Weatherhead says that the room for intercession is now where he spends the least time. He simply imagines himself bringing the person with the need to Jesus and saying, Here's my friend, _____ Please meet his need.

ROOM #7 MEDITATION

Special Music: *People Need the Lord*, Shepherd's Fold Music/River Oaks Music Co. CCLI License #764943

This is a big room at the top of the house set aside for meditation. Here we sometimes take an incident in the Gospels and we imagine we are present as if in the body at each recorded act in the life of the Redeemer. Our meditation should end in dedication.



Isaiah, newly sensitized by his own touch from God offers himself for the alleviation of the world, Here I am, send me.

Suggested prayer chorus:
Except I am moved with compassion SASB #527, TB 540

Closing Song: *Rescue the Perishing*, SASB #691, TB 775

Jesus taught us, through His example, the wide and varied scope of prayer. He prayed for all kinds of people, and over everything. He prayed for others by name Luke 22:32. He prayed for children Matthew 19:13. He is still praying for us Hebrews 7:25.

Suggested Meditation: Isaiah 6:1-8

- I. Vision of God vs: 1-4
- II. Vision of Himself vs: 5-7
- III. Vision of Service vs. 8

It seems as if in his cleansed condition Isaiah comes into a new relationship with God.

For a complete text call or email Women's Ministries

PRAYER - A - GRAM

This prayer-a-gram ... comes from a friend who has knelt in prayer for you.

To: _____

Date: _____

I prayed for you today. In a quiet moment I thought of you ... I lifted up your name to God and sought His blessing upon your life.

From: _____

The day was long, the burden I had borne seemed heavier than I could longer bear; And then it lifted — but I did not know someone had knelt in prayer. Someone had prayed, and Faith, a reaching hand took hold of God, and brought Him down that day ... So many, many hearts have need of prayer ... Oh, let us pray! G.N. Crowell

Groups for Truth Seekers



Use these ideas for generating Bible-based discussion with unchurched friends and associates in a small-group setting to talk about faith. As you invite people into your home, explain in advance the format for the evening, and set and stick to a time-frame that's convenient for all.

Confronting the Headlines. Spiritual or *religious* issues — such as heaven, hell, divine inspiration of Scripture, angels, healing, cults, and the *historical Jesus* — regularly make the front cover of major magazines such as Time, Newsweek, and Maclean's. Invite neighbours and coworkers, to a one-night discussion of such issues. The primary goal should be to draw out questions and perspectives without being judgmental or condescending.



Create a *safe* environment. Encourage group members to pass on any question they might have and just listen to what others had to say. Keep questions open ended, requiring more than a yes or no answer. Prepare some questions ahead of time — a *tickler* list to rely on if the conversation bogged down. As much as possible, encourage participants to ask questions of their own.

Try to stay away from *Christianese* — words that would have meaning only to Christians.

Depending on the flow of the discussion, participants might want to meet again.

Searching the Scriptures. *The*

Message, a paraphrase of the New Testament by Eugene Petersen, is very contemporary. A good resource study in advance to find key scriptures that speak to contemporary issues such as honesty, integrity, and fear. Pick two or three scriptures per issue. Don't overwhelm people with too many verses. Stay away from passages where the meaning is hidden or demands significant Bible knowledge to discern.

Keep questions simple; What do you think is being said here?

Movies with a Message.

Another simple way to reach out to neighbours is with videos. Choose movies people have already seen or read

about. Rather than watch the entire video together, isolate a small section, no more than seven or eight minutes, and discuss personal, relational, and other values it represented. Tie the discussion to some thought provoking scripture

Some video clips to consider.

- *It's a Wonderful Life*
- *Michael*
- *Simon Birch*
- *City of Angels*
- *What Dreams May Come*
- *Ever After*
- *Sister Act*
- *Mr. Holland's Opus*
- *The Passion of the Christ*
- *The Power of One*
- *Remember the Titans*



A Guide to Group Prayer by the Prophet Nehemiah



Has the prayer time in your small group become a routine recital of wish lists by each member? Breaking out of this rut is a challenge for any group leader. The secret is to turn the focus from your desires to God's. A brief look at Neh. 1:5-11 shows four steps that can help your group focus its prayers.

Focus on who God is and what He has done for you vv. 5-6. When Nehemiah heard that the walls of Jerusalem were destroyed, his prayers focused on who God is, not on the problems at hand. He called God awesome. He reminded God that He listens to His servants' prayers. Your group can begin by praising God for His wonderful creation, His gift of salvation, His love and mercy. Thank God for answered prayer and for specific blessings.

Focus on who you are before God vv. 6-7. Nehemiah confesses for himself, his household, and for the entire nation of Israel. He says in verse 1 We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.

Sometimes we forget who God is and who

is serving whom. We need to remember that we are His servants and that we have failed Him at times. As a group we can corporately confess for our families, our country, and ourselves.

Focus on what God says in His Word vv. 8-9. In the same way Nehemiah quoted God's own words to Him, a portion of Scripture will often help focus your prayers. Ask group members to read passages that ministered to them during the week, or have verses ready that everyone can read together.

FOCUS
FOCUS
FOCUS
FOCUS

Focus on your petitions vv. 10-11. God wants us to ask Him to meet our needs. Nehemiah doesn't give God a list or tell Him how to answer. Preparing to go before the king, he merely asks God to *give His servant success today by granting him favour in the presence of this man.*

After we focus on who God is, who we are before Him, and what His Word says, our prayer requests take on a new perspective. We pray more for the spiritual needs of our loved ones and ourselves, seeking God's heart in all things.

Being Accountable

Kim Garreffa, Toronto

Being accountable to other Christians is a powerful way to bring important changes in our lives. A small group is a perfect place to discover the benefits of accountability.

This list of topics gives all members an opportunity to choose for themselves what particular changes they need help with. Choose one or more of these topics or create your own, and tell the group which topic(s) you have chosen. You can elaborate as much or as little as you wish. It might be a good idea to record what you choose and what others have chosen. After everyone has chosen their topic, two things will happen:

1. You will be able to pray for everyone between meetings based on their particular need for accountability.
2. You will be asked at the next meeting how things went with the particular topics you brought up at the previous meeting.

There are two basic *rules*. First, feel free to pass. You do not have to take a turn if you do not want to. Second, what is shared is confidential.

1. **DEVOTIONAL LIFE:** I want to spend more time in prayer and Bible study.
2. **PRAYER:** I intend to pray for everyone in this group.
3. **RELATIONSHIPS:** I want to improve my relational life by ...
4. **SPIRITUAL GOALS:** There are certain spiritual goals I wish to accomplish this week, such as ...

5. **FINANCIAL:** I want to improve my financial commitment to God's work by ...
6. **SERVICE:** I want to demonstrate a servant's heart this week by ...
7. **WORK:** I want to treat my co-workers as people loved by God by ...
8. **FAMILY:** I want to do something significant with my family, such as ...
9. **STRUGGLES:** I want to improve the way I handle disappointments and struggles by...
10. **THANKFULNESS:** When good things happen, I want to thank God for them by ...
11. **PERSONAL NEEDS:** I want to take care of myself by addressing the following need in my life:
12. **SPEECH:** I want to control my tongue in the following way:
13. **CHARACTER:** I want to be a virtuous person in all my actions and avoid any hidden motives.
14. **FAMILY DEVOTIONS:** In addition to personal devotions I want to have a devotional time with my family (or other special person).
15. **TEMPTATION:** I want to avoid certain temptations this week by ...
16. **FAITH:** I want to share my faith with others by...
17. **HEALTH:** I want to maintain control over what goes into my body by ...

Scattered Seeds

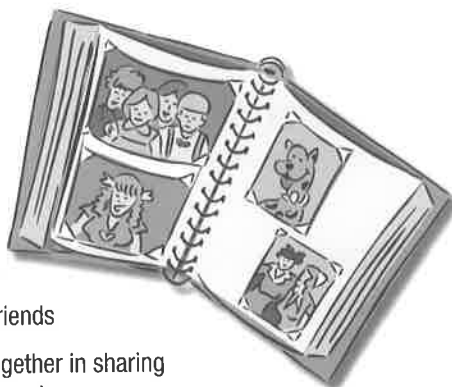
Yvonne Borrows, Weston Community Church




Name of Group	Scattered Seeds
Type of Group	Casual group, that meets around the kitchen table to pray and share what they have learned around a specific topic or bible passage. Occasionally the group helps with special family needs. This service is organized by the group leader or corps officer.
Aim of Group	To develop stronger, healthier relationships with God and each other.
Target Group	Men, women, and young people.
Main focus of Group	Building relationships
Secondary Focus	Growing healthier relationships within the community. A spin off from this group is a 12 step spiritual program.
Duration of Program	This program runs year round, Tuesday from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
Outline of Program	As the ladies arrive they have coffee and conversation. The leader moves the group into their chosen topic for discussion. The discussion time is followed up with prayer, using a variety of prayer styles.
Cost for Participants	No cost.
Leadership	The leadership is shared between two people.
Support Personnel	The Corps Officer is available as a resource.
Equipment	Bibles.
Resources	Corps Officer's personal library.
Possible related Activities	Out of this a 12 Step Spiritual Journey group has evolved. It is a more intensive growth group for those who felt they needed to work on specific issues.
Anticipated Results	Hope to see: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Stronger, healthier relationships- Lives changed by God- A stronger, healthier congregation and community
Results so far:	We will be enrolling 4 new senior soldiers and we have seen one person turn to God. We have also seen several people from this group take on leadership roles within the corps.

Scrapbooking

Melodie Routly, St John's, Newfoundland



Name of Group	Shared Memories
Type of Group	Fellowship, new friends
Aim of Group	To bring people together in sharing their lives and memories
Target Group	Anyone who has pictures or memories that they want to pull together into an album.
Main focus of Group	To build intimate relationships
Secondary Focus	To have fun
Duration of Program	This could be for a set number of weeks, or an ongoing program
Outline of Program	In no specific order, snack, devotional, scrapbooking
Cost for Participants	Cost of album, 10-30 dollars, covered by participant, along with page protectors/inserts and copying of pictures, if they don't want to use originals.
Leadership	Corps Officer or designated leader who will arrange for supplies, time, and devotional.
Equipment	<div><p>Paper, card stock, scissors, etc. can be purchased at craft stores and some dollar stores. The expenses of the supplies can be divided and paid by the participants.</p></div>
Resources	There are some resource magazines found on most magazine racks. These are great for finding ideas.
Possible related Activities	Small groups
Anticipated Results	Short devotionals can also be implemented into this program at the beginning, middle or end. The anticipated results could lead to the sharing of intimate stories and deep relationships within the Christian community.

Scrapbooking ...

A Work of Heart

Captain Marion Durham, USA Southern Territory

What is Scrapbooking?

Rejoice! There is a way to have a women's outreach ministry with very little expense, expertise or experience. Start a scrapbooking group. This is the art of preserving your photographs in an acid-free album with journaled memories and creative embellishments. According to the Hobby Industry Association, it is the fastest growing hobby in North America. One out of five households have at least one person, usually a woman, involved in scrapbooking.

Getting Started

To begin a women's ministries scrapbooking group there are several options. There is a Creative Memories consultant. This organization is the leader in the industry. Contact them by phone at 1-500-341-5275 or check their web site www.creative-memories.com. They are a home-based business similar to Mary Kay or Tupperware. This group will conduct an educational presentation for any group without charge. You advertise the start of a beginner's class but the consultant will do all the teaching. If you would like a hands-on class where you create a page using your own photographs, the charge is around \$10 per person. This is especially attractive to younger working women or mothers who would like a night out and want to assuage the guilt of piles of dusty photographs of their children.

Another option is to put an ad in your local



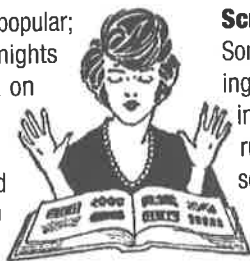
paper's calendar of events or community sale paper. Many are free. You might be surprised at the number of women in your area that already scrapbook. All they need is use of your corps/church hall. Croppers, as they're called because they crop photographs, need lots of table space, usually two people per six-foot table, and good overhead lighting.

Provide simple snacks set out at the workshop. Have information on your corps /church and volunteer programs. Some who have come in to the corps for scrapbooking have joined the Home League and their children now attend corps youth programs.

Monthly Crops

To take it a step further, hold monthly crops. This helps build relationships with women as you all work together on albums. You share your lives and you in turn can share Christ in a very non-threatening friendly manner. You will also learn more about your corps people. Most monthly crops are either held on a weeknight.

All-day Saturday crops are popular; as are crop till you drop nights where you literally work on your albums until you fall asleep! One corps had one of these slumber parties and stayed up until almost 3:00 am scrapbooking! It was a wonderful time in which women were free to share and be ministered to through fellowship with each other.



Scrapbooking Camp

Some areas, have been conducting scrapbooking groups for four years. A huge trend in the industry is women wanting more uninterrupted time to work on their albums. Many scrapbooking groups hold weekend retreats. However, these cost hundreds of dollars, which many women can't afford. How about meeting at the local camp for a weekend of scrapbooking. A great way to give women precious time away from their responsibilities where they were free to scrapbook.

Internet

The Internet can play an important part in growing your scrapbooking group. There are many web sites and e-groups.

Some excellent sites are:

www.dmarie.com, www.jangle.com and www.scraplinc.com.

Reach Out

Scrapbooking groups will benefit your corps by bringing in new families. Through prayer and a lifestyle witness, they will be won to the Lord.

Website: www.grouppublishing.com/scrapbookingAZ/default.html

Christian Living from A to Z — A Bible Study Project for Women's ... combines 10 thought-provoking devotions with a unique opportunity to gain a more personal perspective on the fruit of the spirit through scrapbooking.

Fruit of the Spirit Sherri Harris

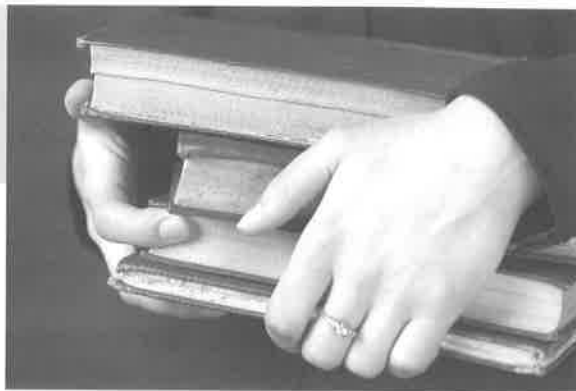
Here's a fresh, hands-on approach to women's small group studies! This innovative scrap-book bible study combines thought-provoking devotions on the fruit of the spirit with scrap-book activities. As found in Galatians 5:23, participants will focus on love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Through bible reading, scrapbooking and sharing, the wondrous ways God is growing his children toward maturity are dramatically revealed! It's bible study that's fun, fulfilling and faith-building! Each lesson and activity fosters deeper relationships with God and others in the group! and inspires continual growth!



Yahoo has a e-group network at www.yahoo.com. You may post your ad on a scrapbooking message board. If you really want to target established scrapbookers in your area, try the e-groups. Many local croppers already have a network on line but need a place to meet. Invite them to use your building. It gets them comfortable with the Army in a new way and you can begin the process of ministry.

Moms Book Club

Gloria Best, British Columbia



A way to reach out to other stay-at-home mothers in the neighbourhood through a weekly coffee-and-book review hour. It has proved to be both an evangelistic tool and a forum for deeper spiritual growth for those who are already Christians. Here are some pointers to help start and sustain a similar group.

➤ **Begin with a core of committed Christians.** In this way, the non-Christians can observe the love of Christ among believers, and the Christians can offer valuable input during the discussions.

➤ **Frequent hot spots for stay-at-home moms.** The park, library, Little League events, and local fast-food restaurants. Invite women to join the group, and explain up front that the discussion is around God's role in the parenting process.

➤ **Choose the right book.** One that already has discussion questions cuts down on preparation time for the leaders. Books that have been used with success are: *New baby Stress*, by David & Claudia Arp; *Boundaries with Kids*, by Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend; *Moments for Families with Prodigals*, by Robert J. Morgan; *Communicating with Your Teen*, by Greg & Michael Smalley; *How would Jesus raise a child?* By Dr. Teresa Whitehurst.

➤ **Have plural leadership.** Take turns leading the discussion and share in fol-

lowing up with members.

➤ **Be open and vulnerable.** Frankness about struggles can open doors to fruitful discussion about God as the source of strength and wisdom in all of life roles, including parenting. Schedule a babysitter to come to your home. This helps mothers concentrate on the discussion.

➤ **Keep the discussion short.** If it goes beyond one hour, the mothers get distracted by their children's activities. Leave time before and after the discussion for informal conversations.

➤ **Meet weekly.** The consistency is important in building relationships. It is suggested the group meet from September to June.

➤ **Plan social events.** At least once during the school year, plan an evening of fun, without children! During the summer, keep in touch through trips to the zoo, park, and pool, and through backyard potlucks.

➤ **Pray.** Pray for each woman in the group throughout the week. Take 15 minutes before the meeting to pray. This prayerful focus reminds us that this is God's work and He is affecting the results.

F.R.O.G.

Families Relying on God

Yvonne Borrowes, Weston Community Church



Name of Group:	F.R.O.G. (Families Relying On God)
Type of Group:	This is a family bible study designed with one family or preferably to be done with two or three families together.
Aim:	To get families sharing the word together and with others.
Target Group:	Families. Corps families pick up the bible study material on Sunday morning. They choose their family time for most it is Saturdays, they invite a neighbour family to share in the study time with them.
Main Focus:	To get families looking at the bible together.
Secondary Focus:	To see new families brought into relationship with God and the Corps.
Duration:	This program runs throughout the school year.
Outline:	Very similar to a Sunday school format. See attached program.
Cost for Participants:	There is no cost to the participants.
Leadership:	One person comes up with the lesson, photocopies and distributes to those families interested.
Support Personnel:	The Corps Officers provide guidance and support where needed.
Equipment:	No equipment needed. Lesson and lesson supplies are provided through the Corps.
Resources:	Corps Officers find and provide whatever resources are needed as they are needed.
Possible related Activities:	Bi-Monthly family events Theme party Picnic Corn Maze Outing Family Retreat
Anticipated Results:	Again we are building stronger, healthier relationships which will lead to a stronger, healthier congregation and community.



Family Bible Study

Topic: - James 4:12 Judging others
There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and destroy. Who are you to judge another?

Related Scripture: Discuss how these verses relate to the topic

- Isaiah 64:6 We are all sinners
- Rom 2:1 You condemn yourself
- Job 35:2 Do we know better than God? Or does God know best?
- Matt 7:1-5 Judge not
- Rom 14:12,13 Let us not judge one another
- Prov 28:25, 26 Trusting the Lord
- Psalm 82:1,2 God judges
- Psalm 19:9 Judgements of the Lord

Children's Story - Joseph and his brothers, Genesis chapter 37.

Joseph's brothers hated him because they thought that Joseph was saying that he was better than them. Joseph was just telling his brothers about a dream he had one night.

How was Joseph judged and what was the result?

Discussion topics: Subjects for each group member to share about.

- Share an example of when you have judged someone.
- Name one good thing about the person you judged.
- Give an example of when you were judged by someone else.
- How did being judged affect you?
- Why shouldn't we judge others?

In Action

- Watch for ways you judge others every day.
- When you hear some one else judging, help them to see some good in the person being judged.
- Ask God to show you how you judge others.

Family Bible Study

Topic: God's love for us, based on 1 John 4: 10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us...

Related scripture

- Romans 5:5 be not ashamed
- Hosea 14:4 I will love them freely
- John 10:17 my father loves me
- Ephesians 2:1-7 his great love
- Revelations 3:19 I love, I rebuke
- 1 John 3:16 he laid down his life for us
- 1 John 4:9, the love of God toward us

Children's story - Matthew 19:13, 14.
God will always welcome us if we want to be with him.



Discussion topics: Subjects for each group member to share about

- Give examples of different ways that we can express love.
- How do you know that God loves you?
- What can you do to feel closer to God, to feel his love for you?

In Action

- Be on the watch for the different ways that God shows His love for you and others.
- Every time you witness God's love thank Him for it, right then and there.

Hospitality to Go

Have you ever considered that meaningful hospitality doesn't have to take place in the giver's home? In fact, in certain situations, meeting on our friends' turf may be more helpful than inviting them to ours. Think about these ideas the next time you want to pack your hospitality to go.



picnic lunch, then invite someone to join you at the park. On a Sunday after church, this could be a great way to welcome the new family that has started coming to your church.

A Care Package They'll Crave

What makes a great care package for those of our church/corps family who serve in cross-cultural ministry around the world?

Size is immaterial.

- taped sermons, music to the ears of those who listen to sermons delivered in another language
- music CD's, sheet music
- holiday decorations. Not all countries celebrate the same holidays we do
- packaged food – chilli seasoning, jello, instant soups, muffin mixes, chewing gum, tea bags, jelly beans, lemon pie filling, Tim Horton's coffee
- reminders of home — a souvenir T-shirt, a scenic calendar, a home-team baseball cap, things with a Canadian logo
- comic strips and editorial cartoons from the local newspaper
- collections of new greeting cards
- simple toys like balsa-wood airplanes, paper dolls, stickers, puzzles
- photos
- recipes
- cosmetics
- magazines
- adult and children's books
- hobby supplies
- plastic containers and zippered plastic bags
- travel-sized toiletries
- number one most coveted care package item: chocolate chips



- When a friend is convalescing, call and ask if you can share your lunch with him or her. Then load a picnic basket with a thermos of soup and some sandwiches or a salad.
- If a family you know is going through an extended period of difficulty — maybe the wife is experiencing a rough pregnancy, or they have just brought an elderly parent into their home — consider doubling your recipes and freezing the extra meals whenever you can. Deliver them regularly, making sure everything is in disposable containers and clearly marked with directions for heating and serving.
- When a family first brings foster children or a new or adopted baby into their home, they're busy trying to get everyone used to a new routine, and may hesitate to go out very much. Ask if you can deliver a meal and meet their new family member. Take along a game for the kids, then stay a while and play it with them.
- When someone you know is spending long hours at the hospital with a seriously ill loved one, take a couple of bag lunches when you visit. Your friend may appreciate a break from lonely trips to the hospital cafeteria.
- Just about anyone enjoys a picnic. Some sunny day, pack everything you'll need for a

Let's Watch a Movie

Movies allow us to explore other cultures and ideas and create an environment for building bridges. Invite Christians and non Christians over for a movie and discussion? Before you do:



- **View the movie yourself.**
- **Read several reviews.** This will help you feel more comfortable leading a discussion.
- **Prepare questions,** look for movies with themes of *friendship, cultural conflict or redemption.*
- **On friendship:** *Lord of the Rings* with Elijah Wood, *Beaches* with Bette Midler, *Finding Forester* with Sean Connery, *The Elephant Man* with Anthony Hopkins. Question for discussion: *What ingredients are needed to make a friendship? and What risks do friendships entail?*
- **On cultural conflict:** Remember the *Titans* Denzel Washington and *A Great Wall*, Peter Wang Open your discussion by asking, *Who has visited or lived in another culture? How were your experiences similar to or different from those of the characters in this movie?*
- **On redemption:** *Repentance*, made in the former Soviet Union; *The Story of Qui Ju* from China; *Tender Mercies*; *Places in the Heart*; *The Hiding Place*; *Chariots of Fire*; and *The Mission*. Discussion questions could probe areas such as faith under fire, personal responsibility, and the power of forgiveness.

In Our Own Backyards

Some people devote this time to mission trips all over the world. How about this summer sharing the gospel from your own back yard.

Have picnics, play Pictionary, wash cars, baby-sit, throw a party, and attend a few others.

The idea of this outreach is to invite neighbours to join in for a fun evening so you can get to know them better. Do service projects in the neighbourhood and non-threatening things like providing free baby-sitting for young couples so they can enjoy a night on the town.

Start a *Building Your Marriage* study by Dennis Rainey, part of the Family Life Home-Builders Couples Series from Gospel Light. Invite the new-found neighbourhood to come. Once they see that The Bible is relevant to real life, study the Gospel of John with them.

By then, we hope your group will have grown. And we pray the Kingdom will grow, too, as these neighbours meet Jesus - first through your lives and actions, then through a study of a relevant topic like marriage, then through studying the bible.



Name of Group:	Koinonia Dinner Group
Type of Group:	Bringing ladies together from church/community to connect through developing friendship.
Aim:	Fellowship/outreach
Target Group:	Community women of all generations and denominations
Main Focus:	To encourage ladies to connect in an authentic church fellowship.
Secondary Focus:	Integrate church women with women in the community
Duration:	3 – 5 hours.
Outline:	Each meeting starts with the reading of Acts 2:42-47, followed by potluck meal, guest speaker, music
Cost for Participants:	No registration fee
Leadership:	Committee ladies/Corps Officer
Support Personnel:	Committee, volunteers from congregation who are interested
Equipment:	Room, tables, sound equipment
Resources:	Speakers, music
Possible related Activities:	Integration into the body of Christ.
Anticipated Results:	True spiritual growth through authentic fellowship as modelled in the book of Acts.

Try This

A Visual Aid

If you are studying the Life of Christ in one of the gospels or doing a topical study on sin and its consequences, this activity can enhance your study.

Bring to your small group meeting a wooden cross or large chunk of wood, a sturdy hammer, and a bag of large nails, enough for each person to have two. At the end of your discussion, have each member walk silently to the cross or wooden board and drive a nail into the wood to symbolize their personal sins that Christ died for. Encourage them to keep the other nail in their possession at all times for the next month, in a coat pocket or in a wallet perhaps. At the end of the month, devote a small group meeting to sharing the results of carrying that nail around as a reminder of Christ's sacrifice.

Keeping Accounts

Sometimes long-term accountability must begin with small things that gradually strengthen our self-discipline. For almost a year, our small group members have listed three things each session that they would like to accomplish in the week ahead. For example, someone's goals for the week might be to have five quiet times, walk three times, and write an overdue letter to a friend. Other goals could focus on applications from that week's bible study. During each session, the group members give progress reports.

Who's Who?

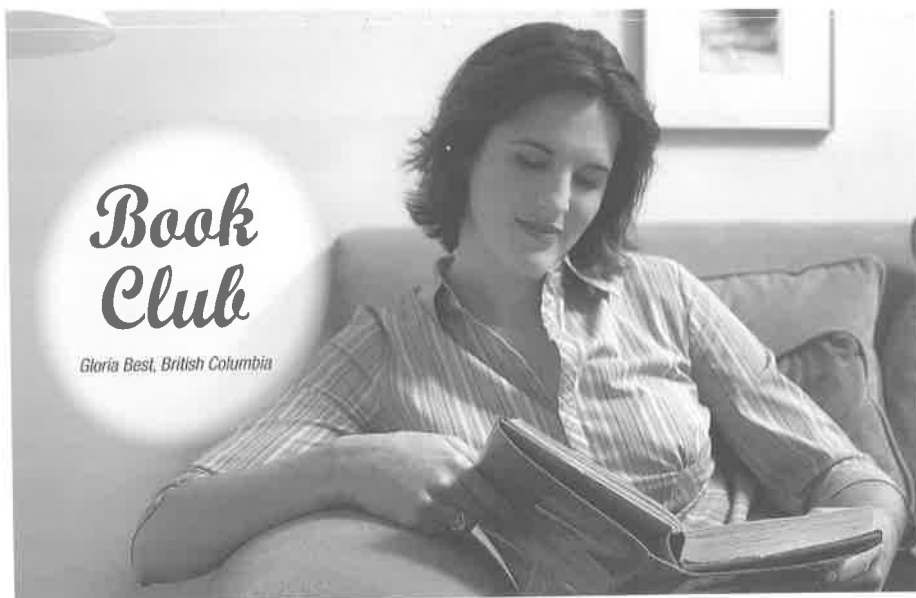
Here's a game that helps acquaint your group members with bible characters. It requires some research and preparation. Have each person write four or five clues describing a



person from the bible. The clues should start out difficult and become easier. For example, the first clue might be, "God said, *He is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles.*" The second clue could read, *He held the clothes of a martyr.* The next clue: *He was once blinded for three days.* Sometimes three or four clues will be needed; at other times, one clue may suffice. Consider doing a *who's who* each week, until every group member has had a chance to try to stump the others. Make available to your group a good study bible or bible dictionary so they can select obscure characters as well as familiar ones.

Nine to Five

As an opener for a bible study on riches from 1 Tim. 6:6-10, I asked group members to tell about their first jobs and how much they were paid. The results were very interesting. (How would you like to break eggs into a stainless steel vat for eight hours?) This icebreaker taught us new things about each other while leading naturally into our bible study for the evening.



Name of Group	Book Club
Type of Group	Educational
Aim of Group	Discussion on different points of view on topical issues.
Target Group	Ladies inside or outside the corps who would be interested in reading and discussing what they have read.
Main focus of Group	To further develop and deepen knowledge of the spiritual journey.
Secondary Focus	Spiritual Growth
Duration of Program	One hour once a month/or every two weeks
Outline of Program	Leader selects a current Christian book and each lady purchases her own copy to read prior to getting together reading selected chapters each time.
Cost for Participants	Cost of book
Leadership	Any lady leader interested
Support Personnel	The Corps Officer is available as a resource.
Equipment	Someone's living room, den, a casual setting, corps fellowship room
Resources	Book – List of suggestions
Possible related Activities	Linking from within and outside the church
Anticipated Results	Development of a support system of friends who have a specific interest. Learn and grow spiritually

Grace Filled Aging: A Biblical Perspective *Dealing with Loneliness*

Resource for Small Group New Zealand Interislander

Opener

Discuss with the group the question *What precipitates loneliness as we grow older?*

Class discussion

Give the following handout as an outline to work through during the class time. Everything in italics is the lecture part for teachers to share.

1. What relieves loneliness?

- Being with someone who understands me.
- Being with someone who can listen.
- Being there when I need him or her.

Conclusion

Of all my friends no one person has the power to change the situation.

2. Let's look at a Biblical Perspective of Loneliness

Ps. 68:6 *God makes a home for the lonely*
Heb. 13:5 *Being content with what we have. He will never leave us. He's always there to listen*

Romans 5:3-5 *Perseverance brings character, character brings hope*

2 Cor. 4:17-18 *Fix our eyes on what is not seen*

3. What are some practical steps to helping loneliness?

- Confess our helplessness. Then we're in a position to receive grace.
- Remember God's promises to us. He loves us so much! How can we learn to be satisfied with God, our Father?
- Thanking God for what we do have.

- Seek to get outside self in serving others. Don't forget about your hurts or try to cover them. Put yourself with others where you can interact, give to and receive from the body of Christ.

4. Pain

Pain is God's megaphone. He whispers to us in our joys, speaks to us in our conscience and shouts to us in our pain. C.S. Lewis



Group process

Give out the following hand-out a week prior to this lesson and have them come early to interact with each other.

1. How has God enabled you through your lonely times?
2. Even during marriage, how does one experience loneliness?
3. Do you ever feel God has forgotten you? How do you change your pattern of thinking?
4. How do we fix our eyes on things not seen?
5. Our loneliness can't always be fixed, but it can always be accepted as the very will of God for now. How can we do this?
6. Why do holidays stir up loneliness? How can we help ourselves during these times?
7. How is loneliness a gift?
8. How does God's grace help us work through the lonely times, find grace in time of need Heb. 4:16, 13:15; Phil. 4:6-8.
9. How does the aging process accentuate loneliness?

Taking Control of Depression

Spring Board for a small support group-Let's talk *emotional health*

Common questions about depression

- Is it normal to feel like this or should I speak to my doctor?
- Are there factors that put me at risk for depression?
- What antidepressant medication is right for me and will it work?
- Are there things I can do to improve my emotional health?
- How long will it be before I feel like myself again?

Information is the first step towards recovery.

If you have any questions, talk to your Pharmacist or doctor.

Good emotional health is an important part of your well-being.

Good emotional health is a key part of living a healthy life. Everyone has good and bad days, ups and downs. It is important to acknowledge when the way you are feeling is more than a case of *the blues* and when you need help. When you don't feel like yourself, your emotional health has been affected in some way. Doctors refer to conditions that affect emotional health as *mood disorders*. They include:

- depression
- anxiety
- stress
- bipolar disorder (manic depression)

Different mood disorders can be related to each other. For example, many people with depression also suffer from anxiety. Talk to your doctor to understand your symptoms and to find the best treatment option.

Depression is a serious condition that can happen to anyone. It is important to recognize for its common signs and symptoms.

Depression is a mood disorder affecting emotions, thoughts, behaviour and physical health. Many people have depression but fail to recognize it or get treatment.

Depression is often triggered by a stressful life event, but can also occur without warning. Genetics and the levels of certain brain chemicals are thought to play a major role in determining a person's risk for depression.

People with depression have five or more of the following symptoms for a minimum of two weeks, including at least one of the first two:

- depressed mood
- loss of interest or pleasure in daily activities
- loss of appetite or unintentional weight change
- too much or too little sleep
- restlessness or sluggishness
- fatigue or loss of energy
- feelings of guilt and worthlessness
- inability to think clearly, concentrate or make decisions
- thoughts of death or suicide

Not all depressions are alike. Some people are more severely depressed than others. Others become depressed only during certain seasons, seasonal affective disorder. Some new mothers develop depression within a few months of delivery, post-partum depression. Children and adolescents also may develop depression.



It is very important to watch out for the signs of depression. Speak with your doctor if you think you may be depressed. If you or anyone you know thinks about or discusses suicide, contact your doctor or nearest mental health clinic immediately.

Depression can be treated.
Your health care professional can help you find the best treatment option.

The good news is that depression can be treated. Many different treatments, including medications and counselling, are available.

Antidepressant medications help 60-80% of those with moderate to severe depression. You may have to try a few different medications before you find the one that works best for you.

There are many types of antidepressants. Some work better on certain symptoms. Talk to your doctor to find the most effective treatment option for you. Your Pharmacist can help you get the most benefit from your medications and answer any questions you may have.

If needed, your doctor will be able to recommend a psychiatrist or psychologist who can provide different types of counselling therapy. Together, you can find the best option to help you recognize and correct depressive thinking and behaviour.

Good emotional health starts with you.
There are things you can do to help change the way you feel.

The way we feel is connected to how we live. Simple changes in lifestyle habits can help improve your emotional health:

- **Take care of yourself.** Stay active. Eat regular, healthy meals. Try to get enough sleep.
- **Leisure activities.** Take time for yourself. Do something you enjoy.
- **Relaxation or meditation.** Deep breathing techniques and meditation can help relax your mind and body.
- **Do not self-medicate.** Alcohol and some medications may worsen recovery by masking the real problem. Check with your Pharmacist or doctor before taking any new medications, including non-prescription or herbal products, to be sure they are safe for you.
- **Support groups.** Sharing your thoughts and feelings in a supportive environment can be the first step towards resolving stress, anxiety and feelings of sadness.
- **Positive thinking.** Stay positive. Try to avoid negative thoughts. Keep doing your normal activities with family and friends.
- **Seek help when you need it.** Talk to your doctor or Pharmacist if you continue to feel sad or anxious. Together, you can find the best treatment option.

Other sources of information on depression include:

- *The Canadian Mental Health Association*
cmha.ca
- *The Canadian Network for Mood and Anxiety Treatments (CANMAT)* canmat.org
- *The Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention* suicideprevention.ca
- *mypeaceofmind.ca*

Small Group Resource

Strategies To Encourage Healthy Sibling Relationships

Sibling rivalry seems to be based on children's perceptions that they need to compete in order to get status and their *fair share* of what they want attention, recognition, and material things. It is helpful therefore to focus strategies on:

- equalizing status of all family members just for being themselves
- helping children to find win-win solutions — working **with** instead of **against** each other

as you would treat an important business meeting or a doctor's appointment.

When alone with one child, don't talk about the other.

Convey to each child that he is loved and accepted just for being himself. Don't make comparisons between children, either favourably or unfavourably.

If you try to make things *equal* all the time, your kids will get the message that it's essential that **everything be equal all the time**. Instead, treat each child **uniquely**.

Find ways to help your children break out of their birth order typecasting. Rotate the chores and responsibilities. Arrange visits with friends that allow your oldest to be the youngest and your baby to be the most grown-up.

Help them identify the admirable qualities in each other.

Help your children celebrate the differences in people. Once they realize that every family member doesn't like the same foods or the same TV shows, they can respect that we also have different tastes in activities, friends, and ways of doing things.

Caution: Many apparent *conflicts* are really *cooperative efforts* between children with the goal of getting your attention or reducing your control!

Ensure each child gets time alone with you each week. Treat the commitment as seriously





Become aware of your children's personality differences. Some think best out loud. Others need time to respond or to write things down. Help them structure their negotiations so that each child has a chance to relate according to temperament strengths.

Teach children how to solve their problems with their siblings by themselves. Don't get hooked into taking sides or you'll be doing it for the rest of your life!

We can only like others as much as we like ourselves. Boost each child's self-esteem.

Avoid limiting your child's identity and self-esteem by labels, e.g. bad, good, shy, aggressive.

Jointly agree on acceptable ways of expressing anger. No double-standard for adults!

A Quick Reminder ...

RESIST THE URGE TO COMPARE

Instead of comparing one child unfavourably to another, speak to the child only about the behaviour that displeases you.

Describe what you see
I see a brand new jacket on the floor.

Describe what you feel
That bothers me.

Describe what needs to be done
This jacket belongs in the closet.
Instead of comparing one child favourably to another, speak only about the behaviour that pleases you.

Describe what you see
I see you hung up your jacket.

Describe what you feel
I appreciate that. I like seeing our hallway looking neat.

CHILDREN DON'T NEED TO BE TREATED EQUALLY. THEY NEED TO BE TREATED UNIQUELY.

Instead of giving equal amounts
Here, now you have just as many grapes as your sister.

Give according to individual need
Do you want a few grapes, or a big bunch?

Instead of showing equal love
I love you the same as your sister.

Show the child he or she is loved uniquely
You are the only 'you' in the whole wide world, No one could ever take your place.

Instead of giving equal time
After I've spent ten minutes with your sister, I'll spend ten minutes with you.

Give time according to need
I know I'm spending a lot of time going over your sister's composition. It's important to her. As soon as I'm finished, I want to hear what's important to you.

Walk Aerobics Support Group

Dena Hepditch, Channel Port aux Basques, Newfoundland & Labrador West



Name of Group:	Walk Aerobics
Type of Group:	Exercise & Fitness.
Aim:	To encourage ladies to take better care of their bodies within a caring support system.
Target Group:	Women of all ages
Main Focus:	To encourage health and fitness in caring for our bodies and to provide moral support for the journey..
Duration:	The program runs September to June 5 days a week on Monday to Friday for approximately 45 minutes.
Outline:	<p>It starts on Monday with a weigh in. Then the day begins with a devotional thought. We use <i>Devotions for Dieters-180 Day Guide to a Lighter You</i>, followed by a tape — <i>Walk Away the Pounds</i> or <i>Walk the Walk</i> by Leslie Sansone a Christian inspired workout, available at Religious Book Stores. A one-mile walk gradually progressed to a two-mile and then a three-mile. A register of attendance and weight is kept.</p> <p>The current schedule is Monday, Wednesday and Friday to do a two-mile walk.</p> <p>Tuesday is a one-mile walk, followed by some stretches using Therabands provided by Health and Community Services and then another one mile walk.</p> <p>On Thursdays a three-mile walk.</p>
Cost for Participants:	There is no fee. A donation is suggested to help the church. There is no obligation.
Leadership:	Corps Officer or a lady from the group.
Equipment:	The <i>Walk Away the Pounds</i> tapes/CD's, Television, VCR or DVD player. Optional: Weight scales.

Resources:

Health and Community Services in your community. In this particular instance the Corps Officer was asked to do a workshop on nutrition and health by the Local Hospital.

Anticipated Results:

Women will find the encouragement and support needed to be healthy, to take better care of their bodies, and develop lasting friendships.

This program has proven to be a great success.

- The Mental Health Counsellor from our local Hospital reported that the program has made a significant difference to some of her clients and she is now suggesting it to others to give it a try.
- The Corps Officer was approached by Health and Community Services to host a Moving for Health workshop. They want to network with this group so that people diagnosed with osteoporosis, diabetes etc. can get the support they need to get active and healthy.

Success stories:

- One lady's husband died suddenly and a collection was taken and given to her with a card signed by all. She appreciated the support and concern shown to her in her time of need.
- One younger lady was going through depression and divorce. She needed encouragement to get out of the house and focus on other things. She used to sleep in until sometime after lunch but now she has a reason to get up and out. She has also recently joined our Home League and begun attending our services. She has shared her struggles and asked for prayer.
- The assistant leader of this group has grown in her involvement with the Corps. It is our hope and prayer she will soon make a personal commitment to Christ.
- A 75 year old lady never misses a work-out, she has osteoporosis and now she can't believe how strong she feels. At her last check-up she discovered her bone density had increased.
- Every lady has lost weight in our program.
- There is an increasing level of excitement about the program. Membership continues to climb. It's an inspiring experience to encourage women to care for their bodies in a healthy, positive way.



Fresh Start

Resource for a Small Group Discussion

Giving women the means to make vital decisions

About Fresh Start

Fresh Start was written to encourage women who are at risk of or currently facing violence from their intimate partner. It was written to help women save their lives, those of their children, and their self-respect.

Fresh Start was also designed for people who want to help, because a woman's life, integrity and well-being are worth saving.

The Fresh Start booklet provides both the emotional support and practical advice women need to understand that they have choices.

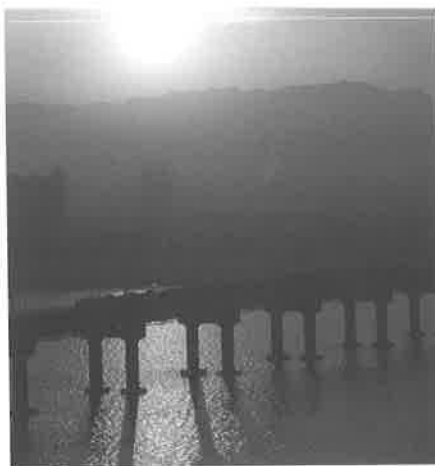
Fresh Start details the dynamics and likely consequences of domestic violence. It includes step-by-step information on how to build a safety plan for themselves and their children, how to rebuild self-esteem and how to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Fresh Start also provides an overview of the Criminal Code, Child Protection Laws and Access and Custody Legislation, and explains in simple terms police procedures, legal options and proceedings.

To ensure that Fresh Start offers the best guidance, it was reviewed by YWCA shelter managers, a Family Law and an Immigration lawyer, Children's Aid and Police Services.

About Domestic Violence

In Canada, domestic violence is a crime. It is against the law for a person to assault or threaten another person.



Spousal violence accounted for more than a million victims over the past 5 years.

Spousal abuse can happen to women of all ages, all ethnic, cultural, religious backgrounds, from any social class or income bracket.

Women are 3 times more at risk of criminal harassment than men and in 59% of cases they were harassed by a spouse or ex-spouse.

Women are 4 times more likely to be killed by their partner or ex-partner.

The shelter system is a vital part of the response to family violence. Each year, more than 95,000 women and children are housed in emergency shelters.

Domestic violence may take many criminal forms: homicide, assault, sexual assault, threatening death or bodily harm, forcible confinement, harassment, stalking, abduction, break and enter and property related offences.

It is important to remember that spousal violence is more than physical violence and can leave lasting emotional and psychological scarring..

Fresh Start is a book on Domestic Violence for Women in Abusive Relationships by Joan Lefevre, available from your local library or book store.

Stress, Anxiety & Depression Support Group

Pat McInnes, Pickering – Hope Community Church



Name of Group	Stress, Anxiety & Depression Support Group
Type of Group	Self Help
Aim of Group	To learn cognitive behaviour therapy and give hope to overcome the illness.
Target Group	People suffering with mental health issues
Main focus of Group	Mental health
Secondary Focus	Spiritual health
Duration of Program	11 weeks, 1 hour Monday evening or Tuesday afternoon
Topics Covered	Symptoms, causes and fears, panic attacks, healthy self-esteem, eat and exercise to help rid yourself of depression, controlling mood swings, assertive behaviour, anticipatory anxiety, letting go of guilt and worry, obsessive scary thoughts, medication and alcohol, keeping stress from becoming anxiety, time management
Cost for Participants	None
Leadership	Facilitator
Leadership	Assistant accountability partner
Equipment	TV, VCR, DVD Resource Library
Resources	<i>Facilitator Manual: Helping you Climb your Mountains One Step at a Time</i> by Pat McInnes. May be obtained from Pat at Pickering, Hope Community Church, 5 Kings Cr Ajax ON L1S 2L8
Possible related Activities	Careforce – Healing and Wholeness Groups, Alpha Groups
Anticipated Results	Recovery and bridging into church.

Pampering Night

Preparation

- Send out invitations to all members inviting them to come and bring a friend to the Pampering Night. Make the invitations look luxurious.
- Speak to the local Pharmacy or Body Shop representative, or gather enough products yourself to use on the night. If inviting someone, stress the idea that it is not a sales night.
- You will need the following items and any others that you think of: foot spa, towels, lotions for the feet, facial masks, face cloths, manicure items, bowls for soaking nails, emery boards, nail scissors, hand creams.
- If you are not inviting anyone special, make sure you are familiar with all the instructions for correct use.
- Assign one person to attend to each section of pampering. Card tables can be used for each section with all the equipment needed for that particular pampering activity.
- Make sure the room looks attractive. You could use flowers and candles. Some soft background music would also add to the atmosphere.
- For supper you could have some fancy finger food (not the usual). Use good crystal glasses and have some ladies on hand to bring the ladies being pampered refreshments etc.

Depending on how large the group is



ladies may only have time to visit one or two sections.

At the end of the evening invite ladies to sit comfortably, maybe in bean bags. Play devotional songs.

Devotional thoughts can be based on the beauty and fragrance of Jesus, and how we need to be a sweet-smelling fragrance to those around us.

Finish with a prayer of thanksgiving for all we have, over and above our needs, and for the many blessings God has given to us.

Adapted for Cedar Springs from Program Aids, Australia Eastern Territory.



Play Group Ideas

- Play Groups need to be well organized.
- Play Group teams seem to work well, as the load is shared.
- Have as many bridge builders into the corps as possible. Grandparent figures, aunts, uncles who come into Play Group and build relationship with the families there.
- Signs are invaluable. Big signs advertising Play Group outside the building are a must.
- A name for your Play Group is a good idea.
- A mission statement is imperative.
- The only reason we are involved in the area of Play Group, is it is an avenue of ministry. Make no apologies for the mission.
- Enlist prayer support teams. Some Play Groups have prayer request boxes on their administration table and parents are encouraged to put in any request they may have. They are promised that a faithful group of people will pray for them.
- Good communication with corps administration is imperative to the success of this ministry.
- Inform Play Groups about activities in the corps that they may be interested in.



Moms and Tots Blueprint

Captain Tina Mitchell, Labrador City, Newfoundland & Labrador East



Name of Group	Moms and tots
Type of Group	Infants, toddlers and moms
Aim of Group	To provide a support group to new moms To help the children learn to share and get along with others through interacting with peers. To serve as a stepping stone for future Sunday School attendance
Target Group	New moms, single mothers, young moms, and children ages, infant to 3 years.
Main focus of Group	To encourage moms to provide opportunities in the lives of their children to grow healthy both physically and spiritually
Secondary Focus	Introduce early in a child's life how special they are to God and plant a desire in their hearts to learn more about God's love
Duration of Program	September to June bi-weekly – 11 am to 1 pm
Outline of Program	Free play learning centre, sing and move, bible story, hear and do, handcraft, meal and goodbye.
Cost for Participants	Donations welcome
Leadership	Qualified Leader or Corps Officer
Support Personnel	Women's ministry group
Equipment	Children's toys, books, craft material, puppets, videos, movies, music (DVD's), tapes
Resources	Children's church programs 2's and 3's Moms & Tots material prepared at DHQ Public Health material
Possible related Activities	Birthday parties for children
Anticipated Results	To see these children attend church and sunday school with their parents. To build strong support between the moms. To develop delightful children who will impact others in their families with the importance of spending time with others while they learn to appreciate and love one another in a Christian environment. To introduce children and parents to Jesus

SAMPLE MEETING OUTLINE:

Theme: Jesus visits Mary and Martha

Upon Arrival – playtime

Craft

Bible Story: Jesus visits Mary and Martha

Hear and Do: Children acted out Bible story.

through the mail

- Telephone each mom with a friendly welcome to each meeting and remind them if they need to bring anything special along and notify them of any changes

Material used:

- Children's church books can be purchased at any Book and Bible
- 2-3's Sunday school material



Meal

Goodbye: Each child left with their take-home suitcase, and were encouraged to return next time!

To encourage newcomers:

- Try to attend every baby shower or personally deliver a gift and share in a home visit with new mom and baby
- Distribute a yearly flyer to every home

- Chicken soup for the mother's soul
- Moms and tots material prepared at DHQ/THQ
- Any other helpful personal experiences
- Material from local Public Health Departments
- Yard Sales
- Donations
- Desserts prepared by church people

For a complete outline from September to May contact Women's Ministries Dept at THQ.

F.I.S.H.

Shellie Kirschman, Flin Flon, Manitoba

Name of Group:

FISH
Friends
Inspiring,
Sharing, &
Having fun



Type of Group:

Pre-school.

Aim:

Outreach, relationship building, fellowship, education

Target Group:

Unchurched women and children 5 & under

Main Focus:

Relationship building

Secondary Focus:

Education – teaching moms to play with their children

Duration:

Long term – September to May of each year

Outline:

1:00 pm – early coffee – doors open early so that moms having a rough time can come early if they need to.
1:30 – Arrival and greeting. Coffee for Moms and free play for children. Moms enjoy a cup of coffee while kids enjoy free play. Do something special for play.
2:15 – Clean up
2:20 – Grace and snack
2:30 – Craft or special activity.
2:50 – A story and or sing/song.
3:00 – Good bye circle and song

Cost for Participants:

No cost. Make it accessible to all who want to attend. Use a sign-up sheet for snack, and welcome donations of craft supplies..

Leadership:

Groups Leader/Corps Officer

Support Personnel:

One person to make sure toys are set out, and coffee is made.

Equipment:

Toys and craft supplies

Resources:

None.

Possible related Activities:

Invite older children of the families to attend one of your kids programs.

Anticipated Results:

New families in church, older children attending kids program, and relationships built. Moms enjoying more play with their children. Families calling during times of crisis, and God opening doors for ministry.



Joanne Jellyman, New Zealand, Fiji & Tonga

Craft - I'm Thankful

Where - At tables 3-8 minutes

Materials - One piece of drawing paper for each child, tinfoil, tape, glue

Preparation

Tape pieces of drawing paper to table. Make circles with the tin foil big enough for the children to see their faces in. Glue to drawing paper.

Craft time

Tell the children that God loves them when they are thankful, sad, happy, playing etc. Involve the children in sharing when they think God loves them. Of course it is *all the time*. Let them colour around the mirror to make a picture to take home, and for them to show people who God loves - anyone who looks in the mirror will see.

Good-bye time

In your goodbye time use the poster *Children Come To Jesus*, available through Religious Book Stores and Trade Dept. As they leave ask them to look at the mirror - *Who does God love?*

Other ideas

- Have a collection of small mirrors or use craft ideas.
- Ask the children to *show me* a happy face, a sad face, a silly face, a waving hand, etc. It is fun for children to watch their own responses and gain experience in following directions.
- Play *God Made* my eyes, mouth, nose, with the mirrors. It is exciting for children to discover how they appear and this helps to develop coordination skills.

Craft - God's Forever Love

Heart painting - 3-8 minutes

Where - At tables

Materials

- One piece of paper for each child
- Red washable paint, bowls or plates
- Heart-shaped sponges. Buy or make your own
- Paint, shirts and tape

Preparation

Cut out heart shapes from sponges if needed. Pour red paint into bowls or onto plates. Tape pieces of paper to the table using tape at each corner.

Suggestion

You could prepare a frame for their work to go in

Craft time

Remind the children that God loves them all the time. He is their *forever friend*. Give children a heart-shaped sponge to do their own artwork with hearts.

Good-bye time

Create a printed poster with Bible Rhymes. Available at Religious Book Stores.

Educational Materials for Unique Learners

<http://www.wisdomseekersinc.com/spiritual.html>

Spiritual

A child's spiritual development begins with the parents' spiritual life. What a child observes in parents, a child learns to believe. Probably the most important thing you can do for the spiritual development of your children is to pray for them from the moment of conception and throughout his/her life.

Some things to pray for:

- Health
- A willing spirit to learn
- A tender heart toward God and His Son, Jesus
- To come to know Christ as Savior at an early age
- To learn to be obedient and compassionate
- To be protected from the evil of the world particularly while they are still vulnerable.
- Continued protection into their adult lives
- Their future relationships with friends
- Their future spouse
- That they would love God's Word and hunger to read the bible
- That they would be people of prayer
- That they would develop a love for giving
- That their character would reflect the fruit of the Spirit
- That they would seek to know God and yearn for wisdom, which will help them in decision-making
- That they would recognize, value and use the gifts God gives them.
- That they will be able to maximize the gifts and talents God has given them without becoming full of selfish pride



- For strength and courage especially when a disability is part of their lives
- Their career, purpose, or call so that they will be able to identify the appropriate choices for their lives and pursue God's will.

The list could continue, but as children emerge into spoken language, allowing them opportunities to pray encourages heartfelt conversation with the living God. For our children, prayer is as natural as talking to Mom and Dad. It is precious to watch as we limit our prayer time because we are in a hurry.

The second area of focus in nurturing the spiritual walk of a child is to read God's Word to them from the very beginning. Use the bible for children, available at Religious Book Stores, which have cute pictures with a verse of Scripture. Singing Scripture to your child embeds God's Word on their hearts before they can even talk! It is truly amazing when children repeat bible verses that are part of who they are!

These two simple steps help prime a child's heart toward faith. God will lead them in their journey to know Him, but our sharing and modeling is a powerful witness to our children of God's amazing grace!



Be a Yo-Yo for God

Leanne Beachham, St. Thomas, Ontario

This meeting goes great with a potluck dinner.

History of the Yo-Yo

The Yo-Yo is over 2000 years old, the second oldest toy in the world! The first oldest is the doll. Yo-yos, or disks as they might have been called, are believed to have originated in Ancient Greece. Even back then people were doing tricks like *walking the dog* and *hoppin' the fence* and they used a yo-yo made out of terracotta. You think modern yo-yos hurt when they return!!!

From Greece the yo-yo has been found in Aztec and Mayan civilizations, throughout Europe and well, let's just say, ALL OVER THE WORLD!

In Europe the yo-yo showed up in the hands of Napoleon and King Louis.

It is said that Pedro Flores, from the Philippines, was the man that brought the yo-yo to the US in the early 1900's. He helped initiate the yo-yo craze in America.

Donald Duncan ran into Pedro Flores, and the rest is History. Duncan has become a household name and the yo-yo, the toy of the century.

Since the introduction of the yo-yo in this country, many yo-yo companies have erupted.

Devotional - Be A Yo-Yo For God

A yo-yo goes out and comes back again. God would like you to be His yo-yo. Here's how: He holds you in His hand. You are safe there. He has given you a message. *God loves you.* You go out into the world with that message



— but look, you are still attached to His hand, He hasn't let you go. Jesus gave instructions to His disciples at the very end of His life: Go to all the people in the world and tell them to follow me. Baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Teach them to do what I have told you. And these instructions are the same ones He gives to us:

The message has three parts:

1. Follow Jesus, which means to learn about Him
2. Be open to a rich relationship with Him
3. Do what Jesus tells us to do, which is to love everyone and do what is right.

God loves you, is the message we carry as we go out, just as the Yo-Yo goes out.

But then God's yo-yos come back. You go into the world with God's message, but you must come back to the church community so that you stay firmly rooted in Jesus' teachings. You can't go out and out and out, further and further away from the worship of the church without getting lost. And Jesus does not want you to get lost. So be a yo-yo. Go and tell the message of God's love, but then on Sunday come back to God's community where we can worship together and learn about Him and our spirits can be nourished for the next week of service.

God So Loved the World is the basic message of the gospel that we share with everyone.

Table Favours

Purchase a yo-yo for each lady.

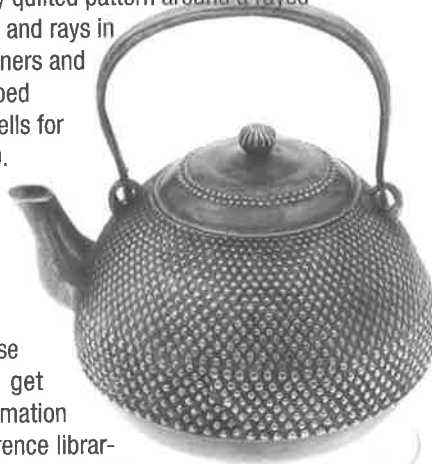


On the Road Again

Linda Bradbury

24½" x 14" made in British Columbia and a quality piece of workmanship that will not be disappointing. It sells for \$40.00.

- A beautiful little crystal castle miniature manufactured by Auralim Crystal of Canada. Measuring about 1½" high and is accompanied with box for \$75.00.
- A little RCMP mountie licensed bear, wears his official red serge pants with side stripe and Mountie hat with Canadian flag. Black in colour. 7" high and has the official RCMP tags and paper folder. Sells for \$23.00.
- Early 1900's pressed glass rectangular shaped dish with amethyst tint. It has a pretty quilted pattern around a rayed bottom and rays in the corners and a crimped edge sells for \$50.00.



Preparation and Decoration

The week before the program make up tickets and pass out two to each member for next week's show. Encourage each one to invite a friend, neighbour for a fun evening. Invite each one to bring an antique from home to share with the group the following week. Decorate the room with road maps, old books, and magazines about antiques.

Refreshments

Serve Coca-Cola in the 80's collectible bottles. These can be purchased at Wal-Mart. Serve old fashion molasses cookies. If there is no time to bake, supermarkets usually supply these.

Facts about Antiques

Here are some samples of Canadian antiques and prices:

- A carved soapstone bear figurine. Excellent quality of a bear that measures 5" tall. Moulded from ground soapstone and resin and from an original carving design. This is a Canadian made figurine and costs \$18.00.
- A golden oak spoon rack measuring

The appraisers for these antiques get their information from reference libraries that travel with Antiques Road Shows. To learn more about this program, check Canadian websites www.antiqueshowscanada.com/toronto.htm, and www.sta-antiques.com. There are others on the web.

Program Ideas

Record a 15 minute current episode of one of the *Antique Road Shows* in Canada. Allow the women to hear the story and description of items being appraised. Just before the actual value is announced, stop the video. Ask the women to guess appraisal value.

Award a prize to the one who guesses the actual value or comes closest.

Personal Antiques

Ask the women to share a little about the antique they brought, how did they get it, how old is it, do they know the value?

Thrift Stores

Contact Thrift Stores to see if they have someone who could come and talk about antiques. Maybe some of the Thrift Stores would be able to lend you some of the antique items that they use for decorating their stores or they have for sale.

Road Trip

Take a road trip to visit some antique stores in your area. Quite often you can find an antique store where a number of dealers are housed under the same roof.

A Dealer

Invite an antique dealer to speak to the group. Dealer may be willing to bring some small items with them to the show.

Antiques on the Internet

Using a computer with internet connection,

demonstrate how to check out some antique websites. Include in your search The Salvation Army. You may find items for sale associated with the Army.

Meditation - Road Trip

No matter where there are Antique Road Shows, crowds gather. There are always exciting surprises, and personal stories to go along with the antiques. The same is true in the Gospel of Luke about Jesus. On his journey along the roads of Galilee, no matter where he stopped the crowds turned up and there were amazing surprises and personal stories to share.

Read:

- Luke 7:1-7 & 9, 10
- Luke 8:26-38
- Luke 9:10-17
- Luke 24:13-32

It is true that we discover some valuable treasures at an antique market or road show. Some things are worth thousands while others are regarded as useless and even junk.

However, after they are handled by the appraiser, who can see the value in someone else's trash, then the true value is revealed. It would be good to read the poem *Touched by the Master's Hand* here.
website: www.barefootworld.net/touch/html

Let's allow the Lord to mould and make us into the kind of people he wants us to be, so that our lives will serve his kingdom in an effective and powerful way. Then as others see Him in us, our true value will be revealed.



Touched by the Master's Hand

Marilyn Furey, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia



Introduction: The chorus says: *He touched me, Christ touched me.* Today we celebrate the fact that Christ is still touching lives and His touch is changing lives. We are going to look at three people that experienced a change in their lives at the touch of Christ. As we listen to their stories, remember your life can be transformed as well.

Song # 215 TB # 669

I've felt a new and loving touch

Prayer

Scripture Reading Luke 8:42-48

He Touched Me Reading or Monologue:

The man with leprosy

The Bible does not tell you who I am, except that I had leprosy. I remember when I first experienced the signs of leprosy – the tingling in my hands, the white spots. I did not want to believe at the beginning that I had been afflicted but soon it was impossible to hide the evidence of this living death and it became clear to my family and friends that I had leprosy. The Law of Moses said that I had to be banished from my home and community. I did not want my wife and children to suffer this cruel disease and so I left.

I don't know what was worse – not being able to hold my wife and children in my arms or having to call out *unclean, unclean* every time somebody came toward me. How I craved the touch of another person. To grasp the hand of a friend in a handshake would have been wonderful. I remember sneaking home late one night and looking at my family through the window. How I wanted to hold each child in my arms and caress the face of my wife but I couldn't. They must not suffer because

of me. After that I stayed away. It was too painful seeing them.

One day a group of lepers were talking about a man called Jesus. Somebody said that he heard that He was from God and that He could heal people of all kinds of diseases. For the first time in a long, long time I began to have some hope. If I could only see this man and ask Him to heal me, I could go home to my family and live a normal life.

Then one day it happened. I got as close as it was lawful for me to go and I begged Jesus to heal me. I will never forget that moment as long as I live. He walked toward me and stretched out His hand. His disciples told Him to stop – they could see even from a distance that I had leprosy. But He reached out His hand and touched me anyway – dirty and contagious as I was. That simple touch would have been enough! I would have carried the memory of that touch for the rest of my days. But something happened when He touched me! I looked down at what had been fingerless hands and they were whole again. I reached up and touched my face and I could feel with my fingers. I had been healed! All because He touched me!

Suitable Poem

Reading or Monologue:

The child Jesus wanted to bless

I was so excited! My Mom kept trying to wash the dirt off my face. I kept trying to tell her that God made dirt and dirt don't hurt. You see, I was going to see Jesus. Jesus and His disciples were just outside our town and my mom and the other kids' moms wanted Jesus to bless us. It is an important part of being a Jew – to be blessed by a holy man. I didn't



think too much of the Scribes and Pharisees and their blessing, though. They were always telling me what I couldn't do – all those rules are enough to make any kid's brain spin. I just want to have fun – not to have to obey rules. Rules are for big people anyway! Where was I – oh yeah – we were going to see Jesus.

When we got there I could tell right away that it wasn't going to be that easy. Jesus' disciples told our moms not to bother Jesus – He was too busy for little kids. That disciple, Peter, was enough to make a kid scared. I hid behind my Mom. I didn't want him putting his big old hands on me. But then Jesus told all those disciples off – yes He did! He told them *Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these*. I peeked around my mom's dress and I saw Him smile at me and I ran straight into His arms. We kids know when big people love children and Jesus loved us!

When I get to be older and have kids of my own, I'm going to tell them how He put His hand on our heads and blessed us.



Chorus of Song # 843 TB # 304:

Yes, Jesus loves me the Bible tells me so.

Poem: Touched by the Master's Hand

Website: www.barefootworld.net/touch/html

I Touched Him

Reading or Monologue:

The woman who washed Jesus' feet

I heard that Jesus was in our town. I had heard all about Him. In fact, it seemed to be the only thing that people talked about – well, almost the only thing. The old nags would wag their tongues when I walked down the street and call me a sinner. And that's what I was! I had never planned to be a prostitute. As a child I had dreamed of marrying my knight in

shining armor and we would have a wonderful little home with a garden in the back and the pitter, patter of little feet running around the place. But my dreams were crushed when my father and brothers died. Why did they have to be so stupid? And I was left to wonder how I was going to be able to support my mother and younger sisters. I did not want to beg for food and so I did the next worse thing – I sold my body.

Late at night those dreams would come back to haunt me. How I longed to be clean from the inside out. How I longed to be able to walk down the street as a respectable person.

But then Jesus came to our town and He had looked straight at me as He passed by.

In that look, I saw forgiveness and love. I don't know why I did what I did, but I rushed home and grabbed that little alabaster jar of perfume that I had hid away for a rainy day. Jesus had been invited to the home of a Pharisee and I rushed in. I couldn't help myself! I started to cry and my tears fell on His feet. I tried to wipe them away with my hair. It wasn't right for a woman like me to kiss Jesus on the cheek and so I kissed His feet. With shaking hands I broke the seal on the jar and poured the perfume on His feet.

The Pharisee was quite indignant when he saw what was happening and I heard him mutter *If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is – that she is a sinner.*



But Jesus knew what I was and He knew what I could become. He told me, *Your sins are forgiven* and then He said *Your faith has saved you; go in peace*. The most beautiful words ever spoken!

Yes, I touched Jesus' feet and I would do it again. I gave Him my little alabaster jar of perfume and He gave me forgiveness.

Chorus: *Rescue the Perishing* SB 691/TB 775

Reach Out And Touch Others *My friend, Agnes*

Object lesson. Need two raw eggs. Explain to the ladies that you have brought a friend with you who is very shy and easily hurt. A warm touch and a kind word will make her feel at home. Tell them her name is Egg-nes

- Agnes. Pass around the egg. Each lady is to gently hold the egg and say something nice to the egg. For example *I'm glad you're here today. Why don't you come to my place tomorrow for breakfast!* After everyone has held the egg, say that *Agnes feels warm because of your gentle touch and kind words*. Hold up the second egg and say *There are people that we come in contact with each day who are like Agnes. Some are shy and looking for a friend. Sometimes they come across as been tough but inside their hearts are breaking. A kind word and a gentle touch can help heal the pain. But when we don't take the time to be a friend we may lose the chance to bring them into our fellowship*. Crush the other egg in your hand so that everybody can see the raw egg dripping down.

Closing Prayer

Themes Using Nursery Rhymes

Adapted for Cedar Springs by Linda Bradbury

One theme for the next ten months.

The historical background for nursery rhymes can be found www.rhymes.org.uk.

Humpty Dumpty

- Entitle your meeting *Don't mind me ... I'm just having a Humpty.*
- As your spiritual thought, talk about the fact that there are times when we all feel like Humpty ... quite fragile, cracked, like we're going to topple over. The King's horses and men are not going to fix things up for us ... but the King himself will be our strength.
- Share the historical background of the nursery rhyme.
- Include recipes using *eggs*.
- Décor – build a small wall with egg cartons as bricks. Place a Humpty toy on top if you can obtain one ... an alternative Humpty could be made using a white balloon. Draw a face, sticky tape legs and arms made of paper strips to the balloon.
- For a little variety and fun – include an egg and spoon race.



secure life? Yet, if he did that he would have never become popular!

What value is a broken egg? One, an unknown chick cannot live indefinitely inside an egg! Two, an egg cannot be eaten until it is removed from the shell. Three, an egg that is never broken is an egg that is wasted.

A life that does not know a measure of brokenness is a life that may never reach its full potential. On the other hand, a life that has experienced its share of brokenness will in most cases make a profound impact on the world.

No one wants to experience the pain of inevitable brokenness. Yet, when these things do happen we can choose what our attitude will be.

We can pretend nothing happened and try to put the pieces together and go on with business as usual, or we can embrace brokenness. By embracing it, we find healing and strength and beauty in brokenness.

Devotional: The Fall of Humpty Dumpty

*Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall
All the King's horses and all the King's men
Couldn't put Humpty together again.*

Humpty Dumpty's only claim to fame was his unfortunate accident. Did he not know he was courting disaster? Yet, he defied common sense. Humpty teetered on the edge until there was no way back. Why did he push himself beyond safety? Why didn't he avoid the risk and opt for a long, healthy,

Ring A Ring a Roses

- Décor – vases of artificial roses
- Share the words of the nursery rhyme
- Share information about roses ... or invite a speaker.
- Hold your meeting at the home of a member with a beautiful rose garden.
- Distribute small bags of pot pourri.
- Share the poem *Unfolding the Rose* – make copies using rose paper. www.rhymes.org.uk
- Craft – demonstrate a simple decoration using artificial roses.

Devotional: For the Love of Beauty
1 Peter 3:3-4

What makes a woman beautiful? Is it her smooth hair, bright eyes, silky skin? Or is it her inner kindness, sweet spirit, and strength that makes others want to know her?

We are constantly bombarded with perfect models of external beauty. The media keeps telling us that outward beauty is what people love.

Evidence shows that women spend millions of dollars yearly on diet supplements, Botox injections, body parts nipped, tucked and lifted.

I know that beauty is something we all long for – even Christians. That's because it's a God-given desire.

I know a lady in my corps who was shy and withdrawn and stoic. Then she came to a bible study. As she learned about God's love for her and discovered her true identity in Him, she was completely transformed. The love of God made her beautiful. The Lord filled her empty places and her low self-esteem with

His love and acceptance.

Understand the profound truth that God loves us and is with us and then share that love with others.

Polly Put the Kettle On

- Décor – kettles, teapots, teacups, different teas.
- Websites for tea information www.tetleyusa.com
- If your group is not too large, hold the meeting in the home of one of your members and invite her neighbours to join.
- Share the background of the nursery rhyme.



Devotional: Fill my Cup

There are many ways of showing kindness to lonely forgotten people. Making a cup of tea is one way. When you take the time and trouble to make someone a cup of tea you are performing a service to them – for you are giving of yourself.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan Jesus teaches us about kindness. The Samaritan didn't know the man he found by the roadside, but he cared enough to stop and take the time to help him. Fill someone's empty cup with kindness and you will be blessed.



Most of us have a secret garden inside, a neglected, walled-off part of our souls. Maybe we're a little afraid to put the key in the lock and find out what's inside. Looking inside can be a risky business.

Mary, Mary Quite Contrary, How Does Your Garden Grow?

- Décor – artificial plants and flowers. These would be distributed at the end of the meeting.
- Share the historical background of the nursery rhyme, this one is fascinating.
- Invite a person from a local nursery as your speaker.
- Visit a local nursery
- Show a short video about famous gardens or something of interest from a flower show.

Devotional: Self-Awareness

It is not enough to understand what we ought to be, unless we know what we are, and we do not understand what we are, unless we know what we ought to be. T.S. Eliot

Remember the classic children's story, *The Secret Garden*? Hidden behind high walls and a locked gate, the garden is neglected, overgrown, and dying. But when Mary, an orphaned girl, discovers the key and opens the gate, miraculous things begin to happen.

With her friend Dickon and her cousin Colin, she clears away the undergrowth, nurtures the budding plants, and watches in wonder as the garden blooms back to life. Colin, a spoiled, sickly, rich boy finds healing and hope in the miracle. Mary herself discovers friendship, love, a new family and a new life.

The Lord already knows the state of our inner garden. There is no risk of losing God's love. The transformation may be painful at first, but the miracle is worth it.

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

- Décor – star shapes cut from gold and silver cardboard. Star (Christmas) decorations.
- Share historical background of the nursery rhyme.
- Competition – identify movie stars. Place pictures around the room, number each one. See who can identify the most.
- Devotional thought – use Philippians 2:15: *.....so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe.*

Devotional: Shine as Stars

Philippians.2:15.

Our culture elevates certain people to the category of STARS. It's because of their ability in sports, music, acting or some other talent. The stars who are often respected and loved the most are those who accept their popularity graciously and show humility and genuineness despite their greatness.

As we follow the example of Christ we too will be bright shining stars and many will be drawn to Him through our lives.

Little Bo Peep

- Décor – toy lambs ... Little Bo Peep could be represented by one of those life-size sulking dolls which hides its face.
- Read the whole nursery rhyme. Most people would not have heard the whole version.
- Ask members to share stories of things they have lost then found.
- Leading up to this meeting, be on the lookout for news reports about lost people being found. It might be possible to play a video recording of a good news story.
- Invite a speaker from the Family Tracing Service.



Devotional: Lost and Found

Lost anything lately? Keys? Wallet? Documents? etc...? As soon as the realization of loss hits us along comes that sinking feeling in the pit of the stomach. Then follows a frantic search, while, at the same time, we desperately try to mentally retrieve every movement made in the last few hours before the loss. We buzz around in a frenzy until hopefully, the lost is found.

I suppose my memory drawer is just too full and so incidentals spill out. One certainty I don't want to ever forget is the fact that God loves me and that God forgets about our

failures and pours out His grace to us. *God's forgetfulness isn't a loss of memory... it is a deliberate choice.* He has made a choice to forgive us our sins and remember them no more. The knowledge of God's forgiveness of our sins should be an opportune time for us to demonstrate His Grace in our lives by forgiving others. Life is too short to be wasted on petty grudges, ancient disagreements, or previous mistakes...perhaps it's time to ask God to help have it all *wiped clean* and start over afresh.

Hickory Dickory Dock

- Décor – clocks and toy mice.
- Share the information about the rhyme.
- Ask members to bring along a clock and share a story to go with it.
- Share some information about famous clocks like Big Ben or the history of clocks.
- Devotional thought – busy lifestyles.

Devotional: Be Still

Read: Psalm 27:14.

When you think about God's principles for living, there is one you don't want to overlook. It is the principle of *waiting*. Impatience can come from the feverish pace set by our society. Cellphones, e-mail, and the www have changed the way we live and communicate. No longer do we take time to be still and listen to the dreams and hopes of a friend. Instead, we hurry away and shout over our shoulder, *E-mail me and I'll get back to you!*



God created us for fellowship with Him, and with others. Certain principles hold eternally true, and learning how to wait before the Lord is one of them.

A quiet devotional time brings a deep richness to our lives. If you are having difficulty finding quiet time, ask God to open up your heart and mind to His plan! You will be surprised at the opportunity He provides.

London Bridge is Falling Down

- Décor – use building blocks or the like to make a bridge on the table.
- Give the historical background associated with the rhyme.
- Provide some information about some famous bridges around the world.

Devotional: In the Fullness of Time
Text: Galatians 4:4.

The year 1809 was a desperate and depressing year throughout the world. Yet in that year Lincoln, Poe, Gladstone, Tennyson, and Oliver Wendell Holmes were born.

God's timing is always adequate and accurate. *In the fullness of time* is a phrase that can be applied to more than Christ's birth. It depicts God's work in bridging the gap between heaven and earth in the context of history.

God's mighty hand guides us in a steady, sure manner, shaping the victories which will be unveiled in the fullness of time.

God's dependable work amidst the clamour of history is a comfort to his children. It is a reminder that hope never fades with the crumbling of the present but awaits some final, appropriate work from God before writing its verdict. To have faith in God is to hope for a better tomorrow.

Ride a Cockhorse

- Décor – ribbons and jingle-style bells arranged decoratively. Perhaps a hobby horse could be included in the display.
- Share the historical background of the nursery rhyme.
- Plan a *musical* meeting, the rhyme goes *she shall have music wherever she goes*. Historically the rhyme was about a Queen ... emphasise that our music is for the King.
- Readings could include Psalm 100, Psalm 98, Psalm 150.
- Invite a soloist to sing.
- If resources are available, play a worship DVD so that members can enjoy sight and sound.
- Craft, demonstrate a simple decoration using bells.



Devotional: Praise the Lord
Psalm 150

Read Psalm 150. This Psalm teaches us about praising the Lord. Verse one tells us where, verse two why and verses three through six tell us how. Verse one says, *Praise the Lord! Praise God in His Sanctuary! Praise Him in His mighty firmament!* (NKV). Most of us equate the word sanctuary with a church, specifically the chapel. The Lord

is reminding us that we are to praise Him in corporate worship. We should have an attitude of praise and joy, to rejoice together in a collective setting.

However, the Lord doesn't stop there. We are to go beyond the doors of our church. Wherever we go we should be praising the Lord. One sure way we can praise Him is by spreading His joy to everyone around us.

Christmas is Coming

- Plan to have this meeting at the beginning of December.
- Christmas décor
- Provide the background of the nursery rhyme – this rhyme may not be well known but it is worth focusing on as a link to the Christmas season.
- Include Christmas memories from childhood – members share.
- Christmas carols.
- If resources are available, play the Nativity scene from a movie about the life of Christ.

Devotional: Thanks be to God for His
Unspeakable Gift
2 Cor. 9:15

There are just 30 days till Christmas and you are looking at that large box in the basement that holds the Christmas tree. Or maybe you're thinking about making that trip to the lot to pick out the perfect tree for your home. The smell of Christmas is in the air and you are ready to begin decorating. It can be exciting but also overwhelming.

In our family we have a very old Nativity set which has seen

better days. The figures are becoming worn and the stable is a bit battered. One of the sheep is missing, and the other animals wobble on their little legs. Would we consider buying a new one this year? Not on your life! This set has been in our home for over 30 years and it is a treasured part of our Christmas tradition.



As we gaze on our nativity, I envision Mary as a young teenage girl, innocent and pure in God's sight. She had to have been a wonderful person, for God to choose her to be the mother of His Son! The questions flow as I try to imagine her thoughts on that day when she was told the good news – you are to be the mother of the Messiah. Wow!



I wonder if Mary had similar thoughts as mine as she waited for the birth of her baby. We read in the Scripture that she was afraid, but that she received reassurance from the angel that God would be with her and that He was going to bless her. Through this young woman and the Holy Spirit we received God's unspeakable gift of His Son, Jesus.

Lord, Cover Me in Love

Ronda Gilger, USA Western Territory

Refreshment

Create a *Twice Blessed Salad*. Ask each woman to bring just one fresh item: a head of lettuce, a tomato, a cup of grated carrots, mushrooms. Cut up the lettuce and have the women create their own salads adding the various ingredients they brought. The salad can also serve as an illustration of the masterpiece of ministry and service we can create when we work together.

Program Ideas

Speakers

Secure a speaker from a women's shelter, crisis pregnancy ministry, social service office or a paediatric nurse, who deals with pregnant women who have no medical insurance and face many stresses because of an unexpected pregnancy.

Time Bomb of Blessings

This activity can be used as a visual of the time we are given by God in which to share our blessings. It can also illustrate women who have had life blow up in their faces because they found out the blessing of a baby is on its way. Use this game to transition into the possible service projects your group can do to help these women and their babies.



Time Bomb Game

Place the small kitchen timer inside a decorated shoebox. Set the timer to go off in 2 to 4 minutes. Introduce the activity by saying, *You may be handed a time bomb. Like the game of Hot Potato, the goal is to pass the 'Time Bomb of Blessings' to another woman in the room. But you can't until you've introduced yourself and shared a blessing in your life. If the timer rings, you will be given a Band-Aid to place on your face.* Play the game, resetting the timer as you go.

Service Projects

Shoebbox Ministry

Ask the women to bring a shoebox filled with items for a newborn - sample sizes of baby products. Be sure to include a contact tag giving your group's address and phone number.

Brainstorm as to where your gifts will be best used for service and ministry to touch the lives of mothers and their new babies in your community. You might organize your group to visit the new mothers of your community with the shoebox and information about your corps.

Cover Me

Make caps for newborns.

This can be included as a part of the shoebox ministry or given to a community hospital for distribution to newborns.

Hearts that Yearn to Reach Out in Love

Billy Graham has said: *The path to happiness is not found in selfish living and indifference to others. Instead when we have experienced the mercy of God, then we will show mercy to others. Then we will indeed be 'twice blessed,' because we will both make others happy and experience true happiness ourselves.*

When we think of the arrival of a baby, we are filled with the wonder of this new life. We are filled with mental pictures of innocence and love. But we often forget just how *daily* it is. New mothers often feel physically and mentally tired, anything but glamorous, and inadequate to the task of caring for this helpless little person who doesn't sleep through the night. Add to this failed relationship, abuse,

teenage pregnancy, abandonment or financial hardship, and this passage into motherhood becomes an overwhelming time of crisis.

God has given us a very special gift - the gift of one another. We have eyes that see

and hearts that yearn to reach out in love. And yet we often forget to look outward, instead choosing to focus on ourselves — our problems, our concerns. We look out at our world with self-centred coloured glasses, when we should have on Christ-coloured glasses, seeing the world as He does.



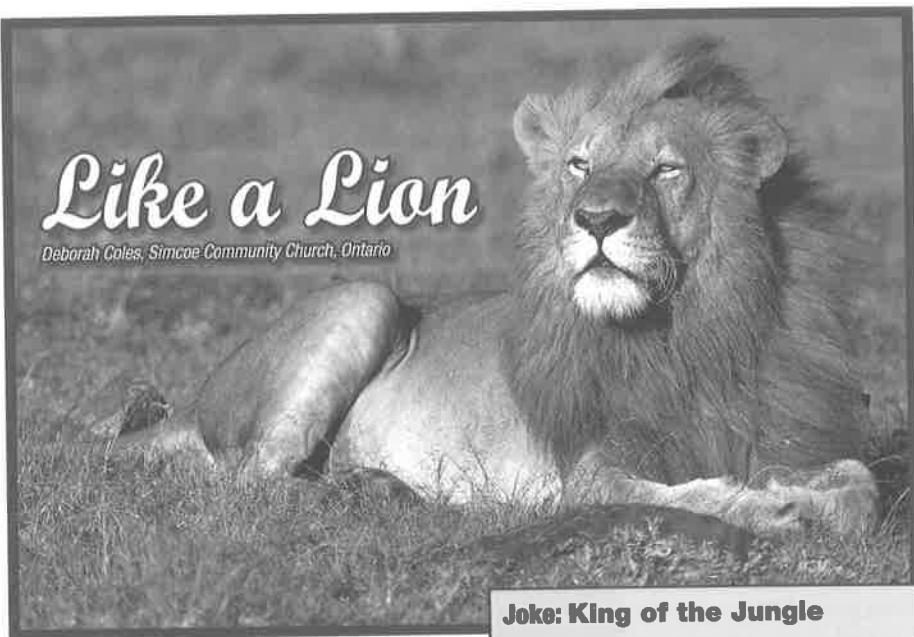
The Bible tells us in Acts 20:35, *It is more blessed to give than to*

receive. These words, inspired by God, and penned by Paul, became an oral tradition, a daily saying, among early Christians. He wrote these words in reference to helping those who were weak. Imagine a first-century believer complaining about his own misery and another coming alongside him to say, Remember, *it is better to give than to receive. Friend, let's look for a way we can give of ourselves to one who is weak! What an amazing concept.* God knows that for us to be emotionally balanced and happy we must give this gift to one another away! Even medical and mental health professionals agree that finding an outlet, or a focal point of concern outside our own personal pain, may alleviate depression.

What if all Christians lived this truth every day? How would you see your world differently? How would Christ be seen through your life? How would those in need be affected by your giving of yourself? *Be twice blessed.*

Like a Lion

Deborah Coles, Simcoe Community Church, Ontario



Songs that support the theme:

The Lion of Judah 233/573 2

Dare to be a Daniel 847/b35

Reading 1: Introduction. See attached

March Match: Quiz using lion words, the first one finished correctly, wins a prize!

Mane event: Take a moment to talk about hair care, new products or styles, etc. Have a short demonstration with a professional.

Lion face exercise: to prevent or reduce double chins, have everyone do the following. Simultaneously roll up your eyes as far as you can, open your mouth as wide as you can and stick out your tongue as far as you can. Hold for 15 seconds or until someone laughs.

NOTE: we always ask ladies to bring or wear something to go along with the theme of the day. You might end up with a lion picture, a kid's book about lions, stuffed animals or someone with a lion print on her blouse. Incorporate these items in some way into the centrepiece.

Joke: King of the Jungle

A lion woke up one morning feeling really rowdy and mean. He went out and cornered a small monkey and roared:

"Who is the mightiest of all jungle animals?"

The trembling monkey says,
"You are, mighty lion!"

Later, the lion confronts an ox and fiercely bellows,

"Who is the mightiest of all jungle animals?"

The terrified ox stammers, "Oh great lion, you are the mightiest animal in the jungle!"

On a roll now, the lion swaggers up to an elephant and roars

"Who is the mightiest of all jungle animals?"

Fast as lightning, the elephant snatches up the lion with his trunk, slams him against a tree half a dozen times leaving the lion feeling like it'd been run over by a safari wagon. The elephant then stomps on the lion till it looks like a corn tortilla and ambles away.

The lion lets out a moan of pain, lifts his head weakly and hollers after the elephant – "Just because you don't know the answer, you don't have to get so upset about it!"



Potpourri

- People showing courage are sometimes referred to as being *lion-hearted*. This is why the Lion in *the Wizard of Oz* is so funny — his cowardice is especially incongruous since everyone knows lions aren't scaredy-cats.
- King Richard the Lion-Hearted was a king worthy of Robin Hood's loyalty
- Dandelions (dent de lion) — name came from French for *tooth of the lion*.

Readings 2 to 10: Bad Lion, Good Lion. Old Testament scriptures referring to lions



from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his. All this royal imagery is where we get the idea of the lion being a king.

Reading 3

Psalm 22:21 *Rescue me from the mouth of the lions.* This is a psalm about Jesus' suffering, the whole psalm deals with the passion of the Messiah. Here, obviously, the lions are the enemies of the godly.

Reading 4

Psalm 57:1-4 *Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for in you my soul takes refuge. I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until*

**We need to depend on
God Almighty to save us
from these roaring lions**

Reading 1

In like a lion, out like a lamb — often describes the month of March! March was named after Mars, the god of war. It seems a suitable name for it is so often warlike in its nature with its strong winds and sudden storms.

Reading 2

Genesis 49:8 *You are a lion's cub, O Judah; you return from the prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness — who dares to rouse him? The sceptre will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff*

the disaster has passed. I am in the midst of lions, I lie among ravenous beasts — men whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are sharp swords. This reminds us to pray about issues such as government and public policies, legislation that dishonours God. Surely we need to depend on God Almighty to save us from these *roaring lions* with their spear-teeth and sword-tongues.

Reading 5

Psalm 58:6 *Break the teeth in their mouths, O God; tear out, O Lord, the fangs of the lions!* A rather violent-sounding response to those mentioned above! However, we note that it is up to God to do the breaking.

Reading 6

Psalm 91:13 *You will tread upon the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent. Because the Lord is your refuge in whom you trust, and because he commands his angels to guard you in all your ways.*

Reading 7

Isaiah 11:7 *The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox.* This paints a beautiful picture of the harmony of heaven.

Reading 8

Isaiah 65:25 *The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox....* A repetition of the hopeful idea above; in some translations, this is printed under the heading *New heavens and a new earth.*

Reading 9

Jeremiah 4:7 *A lion has come out of his lair; a destroyer of nations has set out.* A message of judgment and destruction.

Reading 10

Jeremiah 25:38 *Like a lion he will leave his lair, and their land will become desolate because*

of the sword of the oppressor and because of the anger of the Lord. More judgment and destruction.

Reading 11

Daniel 6:16 *So the king gave the order and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den.*

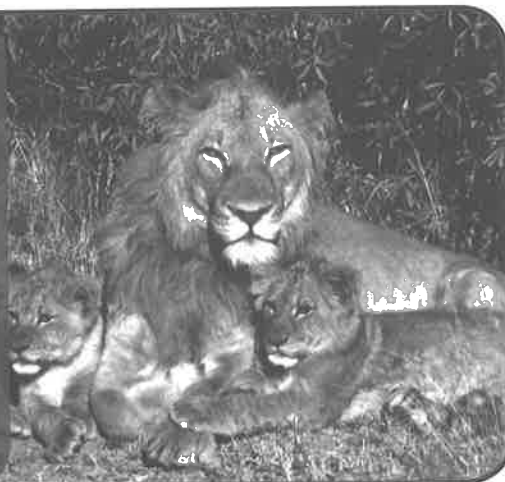
6: 20 *When he came near the den, the king called to Daniel in an anguished voice, 'Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?'*

6:21,22 Daniel answered, 'O King, live forever! My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O King'.

Reading 12

1 Peter 5:8 *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are undergoing the same kind*

You are a **lion's cub**,
O Judah; you return
from the prey, my son.
Like a **lion** he crouches
and lies down, like
a **lioness** ... and the
obedience of the
nations is his. Genesis 49:8





of sufferings.

Reading 13

Revelation 5:5 *Then one of the elders said to me, 'Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is*

able to open the scroll and its seven seals'.

Sometimes the lions referred to in the Bible are *good, sometimes bad*. But whenever we think of Jesus, the Lion of Judah, we are in the presence of the Great Lion.

In CS Lewis' books about the land of Narnia, the idea of God is represented by a lion. He is a great golden creature who breathes life into the wintry land which was usurped by the White Witch. He battles the forces of evil, and equips the children in the story to do the same. He is a lion of velvet paws that are also deathly claws. His roar brings all Narnia to life, but curdles the blood of his enemies. If you are his friend, wonderful — and yet, one does not presume. Is he safe, as in tame? NO. He is the tamer. Is he good? YES and completely trustworthy.

A Prayer: Thank you Father, that although you are not a safe God, you are a good God.

*For a complete text for this program contact
Women's Ministries Dept. THQ*

March Match: Quiz using lion words

Match the clues in column A with the answers in column B

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. Leonardo da Vinci | A. the male's crowning glory _____ |
| 2. Leo | B. the baby of the species _____ |
| 3. mane | C. a group of lions _____ |
| 4. Leonardo di Caprio | D. well known counsellor and writer _____ |
| 5. roar | E. a title given to the lion _____ |
| 6. pride | F. painted the Mona Lisa _____ |
| 7. lioness | G. the female of the species _____ |
| 8. Leo Buscaglia | H. female lion who starred in the movie Born Free _____ |
| 9. Simba | I. starred in Titanic _____ |
| 10. king of the beasts | J. one impressive feature of the lion _____ |
| 11. golden | K. a colour associated with lions _____ |
| 12. Elsa | L. Latin word for Lion _____ |
| 13. Cub | M. name of the cub in Disney's Lion King _____ |

Precious Memories

Deborah Bungay, London, Ontario

Welcome

Song: *Precious Memories*

Website: www.worddistribution.com

Sharing Time: Before hand ask 4-5 ladies to bring an item or two that hold a precious memory for them. Display it and share why it was so precious.



Old time Singing: *Church in the Wild Wood, Farther Along, My Bonnie Lies over the Ocean, Billy Boy etc.*

Websites: www.besmark.com/gospel.html
www.stevesbeatles.com/songs

Poem: *Things to Always Remember and One Thing to Never Forget*
You're unique and one of a kind.
Take the days just one at a time.
Count your blessings, not your troubles.
Within you are so many answers.
Understand, have courage, be strong.
Don't put limits on yourself.
Nothing wastes more energy than worrying.
Live a life of serenity, not a life of regrets.
Remember that a little love goes a long way.
Remember that a lot . . . goes forever.
Remember that friendship is a wise investment.
Life's treasures are people . . . together.
Do ordinary things in an extraordinary way.
And don't ever forget . . .
For even a day . . .
How very special you are.

Meditation: . . . REMEMBER

Everyone forgets something at one time or another. According to the Johns Hopkins

Institute. These are the things people most often forget:

- Names 83%
- Where something is 60%
- Telephone numbers 57%
- Words 53%
- What was said 49%
- Faces 42%
- Can't remember what you just did 38%

An older couple had trouble remembering common, day-to-day things. They both decided that they would write down requests the other had, and so try to avoid forgetting. One evening the wife asked if the husband would like anything. He replied, *Yes. I'd like a large ice-cream sundae with chocolate ice cream, whipped cream and a cherry on top.* The wife started off for the kitchen and the husband shouted after her, *aren't you going to write it down? Don't be silly,* she hollered back, *I'm going to fix it right now. I won't forget.*

She was gone for quite some time. When she finally returned, she set down in front of him a large plate of hash browns, eggs, bacon, and a glass of orange juice. He took a look

and said *I knew you should have written it down! You forgot the toast!*

The ability to remember is a wonderful gift that God has given to us. In our memories we can be a child again, skipping rocks across a pond, or walking in a meadow. We can fall in love, get married, & have children all over again. Time cannot rob us of these things because of the blessing of memory.

We have emotional memories, some of them are happy, and we can recall wonderful experiences. But some of our memories are sad, and our hearts may ache as we remember them.

Memories are also very practical. If you couldn't remember that a red light means stop you'd be in trouble. If you couldn't remember that water quenches thirst when you're thirsty, or you weren't able to remember what day it is, or your anniversary or spouses birthday — you'd be in big trouble. So memories are very practical.



Sometimes our memory fails us. We tie a string around our finger and do all kinds of things to help us remember. Calendars are printed to help us remember. Christmas is marked to help us remember the birth of Christ. Easter is marked to help us remember the resurrection of Jesus.

Memories are wonderful, and as Christians we need to stop along life's road and look back. Although that road might have been winding and steep, we can see how God directed us by His faithfulness.

In the book of Deuteronomy Moses speaks

to the nation of Israel as they wait to cross over into the land of Canaan asking them to remember these things:

Lookup:

- Deut. 5:15
- Deut. 8:2
- Deut. 32:7-12
- Deut. 11:2-7

Joshua also urges the people to remember:

- Josh. 23:14

All of these things remind us of our own lives and of what we can see when we look back:

When we face difficulties, we sometimes forget God's past faithfulness. We see only the detours and the dangerous path. But when we look back we will also

see the joy of victory, the challenge of the climb, and the presence of your traveling companion, Jesus Christ, who has promised never to leave us nor forsake us.

Game: Can you Remember?

Ask for six volunteers from the group. Have them sit in pairs, but they must sit back to back and have no communication with each other. Give each a pencil and a paper numbered 1-10. Then ask them questions such as: What color are your friends eyes, what color shoes did she wear tonight, how many kids or grandkids does she have? etc. When the questions have been asked they can then turn around and see how many they have correct. The pair with the most combined points wins.

Refreshments & Closing

Can You Hear Me Now?

Jean Booth, USA Eastern Territory

Decorations and Display

Decorate the tables with small megaphones. Set up a display of pamphlets that are usually available from hearing aid distributors. On the walls display large posters regarding hearing loss. These may also be available from the same source.


Refreshments

Serve delicious pastries known as Pigs Ears or Elephant Ears.

Program Ideas

Do You Have a Hearing Problem?

- Do people seem to mumble or is the speaker too soft-spoken for you to hear?
- Do you feel tired or irritable after a long conversation?
- Do you need the volume on your TV louder than other family members?
- Do you have difficulty hearing the telephone or doorbell ring?
- Is carrying on a telephone conversation difficult?
- Does a hearing problem cause you to feel embarrassed when meeting new people?
- Do you have difficulty hearing when someone speaks in a whisper?
- Do you feel frustrated when you have to ask your family members to repeat what they have said?
- Do you have difficulty hearing at the movies or at religious services?
- Do you have a problem hearing in a restaurant because of background noises?
- Do you feel that your hearing limitations hamper your personal life?



If you have answered yes to any of these questions, it is time for you to get a hearing test.

Speakers

Contact one of the following hearing specialists to speak to your group:

- Otolaryngologist - a medical doctor specializing in ears, nose and throat. They can detect varying degrees of hearing loss and suggest a remedy.
- Audiologist - can give hearing tests and begin the rehabilitative process. Parents should not overlook testing their babies and children.
- A hearing aid specialist is qualified to best test a patient and fit them for a suitable style hearing device.

A Little Humour

An elderly gentleman had a serious hearing problem. He went to the doctor who fitted him with hearing aids that allowed him to hear clearly. When he went back to the doctor, the doctor said, *Your hearing is perfect. Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again. The man replied, Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to the conversations. I've changed my will three times!*

Hello, Is Anybody Home?

When my new brother-in-law first came to visit us, he and my sister would ring the doorbell and patiently wait for someone to answer. If there was no response after a few minutes, he would tentatively open the door, stick his head in just a little bit, and in a quiet voice say, *Hello? Hello? Is anybody home?* Now, when my brother-in-law, who has become one of our closest friends, and my sister come to visit,

he rarely bothers with the doorbell. When he arrives, the door swings boldly open and we are greeted with the phrase we have come to love, *Hey guys, watcha got to eat?*

As the depth of our relationship has grown, he has learned that he does not need to be tentative in his greeting. Rather, he can enter, ask and know that he is loved and welcomed. We look forward to providing for his needs. It is the closeness of our relationship that now impacts the boldness of his greeting and the sincerity of our response.

How long does it take for us to gain sufficient confidence to boldly come to God with our concerns? For the Apostle John and many of the rest of us, it takes a lifetime. Not because the lesson is so difficult to learn, but because it is in our everyday walk with God that we experience how eager He is to welcome, hear us, and meet our needs. It is only in that communion with Him that we ultimately grasp the fullness of John's realization, *This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us* 1 John 5:14.

For those who truly love the Lord, we need never knock and wishfully hope He might possibly answer. Rather, we can boldly swing open the door and know that we are welcome. He is waiting to hear and respond. There is indeed someone at home and a heavenly banquet is waiting.

Our Heavenly Father is inviting each of us to come and dine. We can accept the invitation with the confidence that comes from having a loving relationship with our best friend.





Come to Your Senses

Denise Brine, United Kingdom

Each time, Jesus confronted the sin in love, and brought about restoration, not rebellion. He did not want to further the embarrassment of either woman but he did want them to leave their lives of sin.

Remembering Jesus' reaction, take time to consider how you view people and how you view the situations that they are in. Take time also to consider situations you might have difficulty in accepting. How compassionate are you in your reactions?

The Way I See Things

Sight

One of the lovely things about holiday photographs is to look back at some of the views we experienced in places that were new to us. On such occasions we thank God for the gift of sight. But when we think of views and sights and vision we can also use our thoughts to help us think more deeply about how we view certain situations or even people. We can also take the time to consider how Jesus himself viewed situations and people.

Read: John 4:4-29; 39-42. The woman of Samaria met with Jesus when she came to the well at noon.

Think: How did Jesus react to what he saw?

Read: John 8:2-11. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees cast the woman taken in adultery before Jesus.

Think: How did Jesus react to what he saw?

Pray: That you will begin to see things with the eyes of Christ.

Thinking of sight, vision and blindness recall the incident when Saul had his experience on the Damascus road Acts 9: 10. Blinded by the light from heaven, Saul was led to Ananias, who had in a vision been instructed to restore Saul's sight. Saul was blind for three days but, it was only in his temporary blindness that he began to see clearly!

Think: Can you recall a passing difficulty that has helped to clarify a situation for you?

Smell

Fragrance is perhaps a more pleasant word!

Think: Can you recall the pleasure of walking through a flower garden with the scent of roses or other flowers filling the air?

Have you ever walked across a herb or camomile lawn? The fragrance is released when pressure is applied to such a lawn. In life, times when we feel crushed, are often the times when our *fragrance* is most evident.

Think: of people crushed whose subsequent *fragrance* has spread and influenced others.

Joni Eareckson Tada — an all-active American girl who broke her neck in a diving accident at the age of 17. She was left totally paralysed from the neck down. Confined to a wheelchair she overcame bitterness, confusion and violent questions to learn to trust a loving God and since then in writing, painting, testimony and a worldwide speaking ministry her influence has been immense.



Paul the Apostle was *struck down, but not destroyed* 2 Corinthians 4:9.

He was also aware that *through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ*. 2 Corinthians 2:14.

Read: 2 Corinthians 6:4-10.
v 10 *sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.*

Pray: That we might respond to crushing in a similar way. May the fragrance of our crushing be influential.

Taste

We have many different sensations of taste.

We refer to things as being bland, sweet, savoury, sour, etc. The variety adds interest as we sample many foods or drinks.

We speak of things *leaving a nasty taste in one's mouth*. Why is it that many medicines seem to have an awful taste? How is it that something intended to be good for you and designed to bring healing can have such a bad taste? A famous song from the film Mary Poppins suggests that, *A spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down!*

Think: Can you recall an occasion in your life when something *difficult to swallow* brought a beneficial effect? Maybe criticism or rejection or an equally tough situation that in the end turned out surprisingly well.

Read: Exodus 15:22-25a. The waters were bitter to taste and yet, instructed by and obedient to God, Moses was able to make bitter waters fit to drink.

Pray: That when we are in contact with people who are finding things *hard to swallow, or bitter to taste*, we may become aware of God's guidance and be obedient to his instructions that through us the waters may become sweet.

We speak of things (being) an *acquired* taste.

Read: Psalm 34:8: *Taste and see that the Lord is good.*

Think: How can we encourage people to taste what Jesus has to offer? What is it that Jesus has given to us that we want them to experience as well? Forgiveness? Salvation? Abundant life? Can you think of other things

belonging to the Christian faith that people could acquire a taste for? Call to mind all that Jesus has to offer to us.

Pray: That we might be instrumental in helping others to acquire a taste for the things of God.

Touch

These days many children's books have fabrics on the pages and children are encouraged to *touch and feel*. Children may be taken to special park areas where they can touch and stroke various young animals. They enjoy touching lambs and rabbits, kittens and



puppies and so on. They get pleasure from feeling the softness of their fur. When people buy clothes they often feel the fabric to try and sense what it will be like against their skin.

Touch is an important sensation with which we have been blessed.

Jesus was a man who recognised the need to reach out and touch people. He knew how encouraging and helpful it was when he touched those who were dismissed by others as worthless, especially those who were unused to the touch of a human hand.

Read: Mark 1:40-42 and notice the words, *Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man... v 41.*

Mark 1:31, Jesus took the hand of Peter's sick mother-in-law and helped her up.

Mark 5:28 recalls the words of the woman *If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.*

Still today there is the need to touch, to reach out and touch people's lives.

Jesus may want to touch others by using your hands. He may want to bring comfort to others by using your arms.

Think: Can you recall occasions when you have appreciated the touch of another person in times when you needed physical support or comfort?

Have you ever considered that sometimes people use the greeting of shaking hands as a method of keeping people at arm's length rather than as a welcome that draws them nearer!

Pray: That we might make an effort to reach out and touch people's lives.

Hearing

We hear many different sounds through the course of a day.

We may hear sounds that are threatening. A growling dog as we knock on a door makes us fearful. Our heart may beat faster. The threatening sound warns us that there may be something dangerous ahead. We need to take note of threatening sounds and act accordingly.

We may hear sounds that tempt us. On the television and the radio various products are advertised which are usually accompanied by a slogan or catchphrase that remains in our minds. The advertising agency knows that if

they use a catchy slogan or tune we will keep their product in mind and we may be tempted to buy something we cannot afford, something that may not be good for us, or something that will lead us into areas better avoided.



John Ernest Bode spoke in his song about the *tempting sounds I hear*. Let us be aware and wary of similar sounds.

We may hear sounds that comfort us.

There are times when we need to hear the voice of Jesus, to offer us comfort in times of distress or depression, to encourage us in times of fear or worry and to strengthen us if we find we are faltering.

Think: Of times when you have become aware of the presence of Jesus and have recalled his biblically recorded words of comfort and encouragement which, in turn, have sustained you in periods of difficulty.

Meditate: As you read the words of this poem.

For The Times

*For the times I feel your presence,
Lord. I thank you,
For the knowledge
that you're near me ev'ry day,
But in moments when the world
puts pressure on me,*

*That's the time I need to hear
you gently say...*

Refrain

*I am always with you,
I am always with you
You will never be alone.
Rest in the strength I give you,
Rest in the strength I give you,
Feel that you're not on your own.*

*For the times that I feel happy
Lord, I thank you,
For the times when peace
and joy invade my day,
But in moments when d
epression falls upon me,
That's the time I need to hear
you gently say ... (Refrain)*

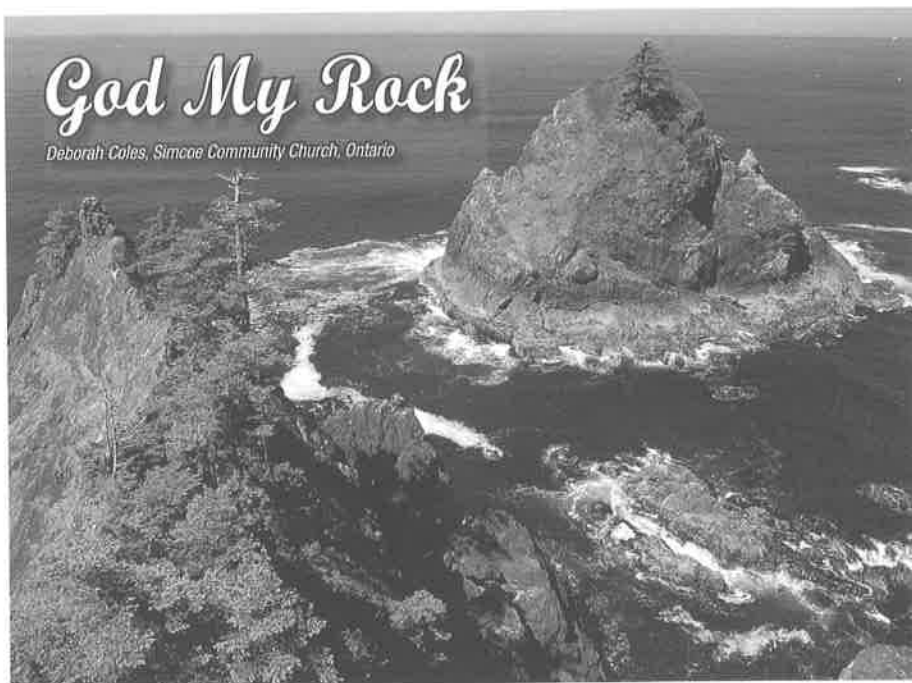
*For the times when life is smooth,
my Lord I thank you,
For the times I walk with confidence
your way,
But in moments when I find
my footsteps falt'ring
That's the time I need to hear
you gently say ... (Refrain)*

Denise Brine

Pray: For God's presence, for his words of comfort, reassurance, chastening and rebuking. Pray that we might have ears that listen as God guides us day by day.

Concluding prayer and thanksgiving:
SB 28/TB For the beauty of the earth.

In writing this I am aware that there will be those who may not have the gifts of all the senses and who are often blessed with compensatory gifts. However, in a spiritual sense none of us can afford to be blind or deaf etc. to the things of God.



Introduction

A Bible study for ladies Home League evening

Preparation

A week prior, ask ladies to bring a rock or part of their rock collection, if they have one.

Display

Rocks, fossils, pet rocks and Inuksuit

Introduce theme

Songs

- Rock of Ages SB 32 / TB 311
- How firm a foundation SB 653 / TB 566 (use chorus)
- My hope is built SB 745 / TB 51
- A wonderful Saviour SB 710 / TB537

Rock Humour

- Did you hear about the girl who realized she wasn't the only pebble on the

beach? *She became a little boulder.*

- I don't like to be taken for *Granite*.
- If you sing too much *rock music*, you could end up with a gravelly voice!

Crossword puzzle

Use Puzzle maker at DiscoverySchool.com to create crossword and word search puzzles. Just feed in the vocabulary and clues to the theme and it's set up for you!

Rock Game Guess the number of pebbles in the jar.

Did you bring a rock? Why do you own/keep such a thing? I know of a beautiful and godly S.A. officer who has a rock — not a diamond, but a pretty stone for her engagement ring. I know of children, some related to me who save rocks gathered from beaches, school trips and special places — a cheap but very heavy way to preserve memories!

Introduction to Devotions

Inukshuk is a beacon. For travellers in Canada's north, an Inukshuk is a welcome sight. It says, *I've been here before you, you're on the right path.*

Inukshuk. Singular, meaning *likeness of a person* in Inuktitut. The Inuit language is a stone figure made by the Inuit. The plural is *inuksuit*. The Inuit make inuksuit in different forms and for different purposes, to show directions to travellers, to warn of impending danger, to mark a place of respect, or to act as helpers in the hunting of caribou. Similar stone figures were made all over the world in ancient times, but the Arctic is one of the few places where they still stand. An inukshuk can be small or large, a single rock, several rocks balanced on each other, round boulders or flat. Inuit tradition forbids the destruction of inuksuit. Taken from www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com



If you lost your bearings in the North, an inukshuk would be a most comforting sign of human help and hospitality. Similarly, Jesus is the Rock of our salvation, who points us from our tundra wanderings in sin to the safety and comfort of God and His people.

A Rock Booster

Give small prize to someone who:

- sent an encouraging note to another in the past week.
- brought a Bible today.
- brought a rock to tell about.
- wearing rocks, whether diamond ring, garnet necklace etc.

Prayer Rock - A copy to each person, with a small rock glued on it.

Prayer Rock

*I'm your little prayer rock,
and this is what I'll do
Just put me on your pillow
until the day is through.
Then turn back the covers
and climb into your bed.
And WHACK!! Your little prayer rock
will hit you on the head.
Then you will remember,
now that the day is through
To kneel and offer prayer,
just like you wanted to.
And when you are finished,
just dump me on the floor.
I'll stay there through the night
to give you help once more.
When you get up next morning,
CLUNK!! I stub your toe
So you will remember your
morning prayer before you go.
Put me back on your pillow
when your bed is made
And your clever little prayer rock
will continue in your aid.
Because your heavenly Father
cares and loves you so,
He wants you to remember
to talk with Him, you know!*

Study - Through the Bible, God my Rock.

Divide the devotional into readings for group to share.

- One of the first references to God as the Rock is found in Genesis 49:24. Read from verse 22 to see how Joseph's bow remained steady, and his strong arms limber, because of the Mighty One of Jacob, the shepherd, the Rock of Israel. When God is our foundation where we rest and where we build on, then we are able to withstand *bitter archers' attacks* and hostility, and even to be greatly



blessed as Joseph was. He was a good example of a restorer and a *builder*.

- In Exodus 33:22, we find the *Cleft in the rock* story. Hidden in the rock, Moses was safe enough to have a close encounter with God. He was hidden FROM God, IN God. God covered the cleft with his hand so that Moses could see him up close and personal, without actually being face to face. Would it have burned his eyes out? *A wonderful Saviour is Jesus my Lord, a wonderful Saviour to me, he hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock, where rivers of pleasure I see.* (SASB 710/537)

- Deuteronomy 32:4 *I will proclaim the Name of the Lord. Oh praise the greatness of our God! He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.*
- In 2 Samuel 2:2 Hannah prays, saying, *There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.* These are her words of worship as she presents Samuel at the temple, just as she had promised. I imagine she felt she needed a Rock to steady her as she left the little one behind.
- Psalm 18 from *The Message*.
*I love you
O Lord, my strength.
I dearly love you — the word for love used here is an unusual one, an especially tender expression of love: poetry meets with gratitude in a hymn of praise.*

*The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
All the terms speak of safety, deliverance, protection, the core idea being that God is the Strong One.*

*I call to the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and I am saved from my enemies. ... he reached down from on high and took hold of me; he drew me out of deep waters. ... The Lord was my support.
... For who is God besides the Lord? And who is the Rock except our God?
Who is God besides the Lord focuses on the exclusivity of his character.
Compare the modern version with our more familiar translations
Does this new wording disappoint you?
Jar you? Refresh you?*



- Psalm 62:6 *He alone is my rock* — I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name — really, we cannot depend on other people, we cannot depend on ourselves. We need Jesus.
- Matthew 7:24 The Wise and Foolish Builders
Haddon Robinson tells the story of a Dallas homebuilder who couldn't afford to do the bric-a-brac if he did proper foundations and insulation. If he did a good job on the basics, and then added the cosmetic details, his price was too high. So other builders undercut him. People didn't care about what they couldn't see. Just a few years later, that whole area looked like a slum. People didn't invest in what counted, and the whole neighbourhood went down.

From The Solid Rock construction Company, by Haddon Robinson, Discovery House Publishers, Grand Rapids Michigan, 1989.

- Psalm 19:14 *May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.*
- Psalm 40:2 *He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.*
- Psalm 61:2 *lead me to the rock that is higher than I.*
... *for you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the foe ...*
The idea of the strong tower that we read of so often, is of somewhere up high, out of enemy reach, yet not a place where you're cornered, trapped.

Other New Testament rocky references:

- Romans 9:33 - *a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.*
- 1 Corinthians 10:4 - *and that rock was Christ, referring to the rock they drank from in the wilderness.*
- 1 Peter 2:6 - Peter quotes Isaiah on this subject

God My Rock

Selected verses from Psalm 18 *The Message Translation of the Bible*

A complete text may be obtained from Women's Ministries, THQ

The Light

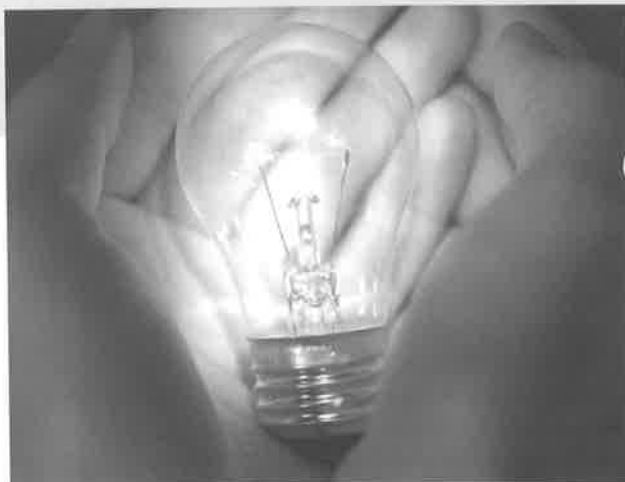
Mrs. Frances Steward, Hanover, Ontario

This program may be used for an evening of worship

Preparation: Strings of light bulbs, different types and sizes.

Game: While the ladies are waiting for everyone to arrive, they can play the following game.

How many words can you make out of the words LIGHT BULBS?



Opening

*Jesus is the Light of the world
And those of us who have found Him
Have lit our candles by His flame,
Jesus has none but us to keep
His Holy Light still radiant.
It is the responsibility of those
Who proudly bear the
name of Christian
To carry our candles
Lighted by His love and grace
Unto the ends of the earth
So all of God's creation
Even those who dwell in distant, ob-
scure lands
Might see the light, and having seen,
Might also light their candles
By the only true and everlasting light,
Our Lord and Saviour — Jesus Christ.*

Song

#397 (SASB) TB 586 - *When We Walk
With the Lord*
Alternative #478 (SASB) TB 386 *Let the
Lower Lights Be Burning*

Scripture Readings

The ladies may read selected Scripture verses with the word *light* in them.

- Psalm 119:105
- Jeremiah 4:23
- John 8:12
- Luke 15:8
- John 12:36
- John 3:19
- 1 John 1:7

Game

Each answer has the word *light* in it

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. To make lighter | lighten |
| 2. Comes before a storm | lightning |
| 3. A fire-fly | lightning bug |
| 4. Opposite of heaviness | lightness |
| 5. A Beacon light | lighthouse |
| 5. Bedtime taps | lights out |
| 7. Professional boxer | light-weight |
| 8. Metal rod to divert lightning | lightning rod |
| 9. Free from cares or worries | light-hearted |
| 10. When we feel dizzy | light-headed |

Song

#400 SASB TB 701 - *Jesus is My Light*
Alternative - # 457 SASB TB 457/458 - *Send Out Thy Light and Thy Truth*

Devotional - The Light

Have a light bulb or a display of light bulbs to demonstrate.

Read Matthew 5:16

There is a familiar object that we often take for granted as it is readily obtainable. We need and use some every day and night *show a light bulb*. Yes, it is an ordinary light bulb.

Let us think about three very important lessons that this little light can teach us about ourselves. Here's what Jesus says about light in Matthew 5:14-16. Let's compare ourselves with the light bulb and its use.

The Necessary Power

This light bulb cannot serve its purpose while I hold it in my hand. It cannot produce light by itself, can it? First it must be connected to a socket where the central source of power makes it possible to give out light. Sometimes we are like the unconnected lights bulbs. We might be in good condition and have all the potential for being useful but we are not connected to the Central Source of power. Have you ever put a light bulb into a poor connection? What happens? It goes on and off, sometimes sputters, grows bright, then dims, and we wonder how much longer it will work. We are like this when we are not in good connection with the right source.

Read Luke 12:35

Lives Occupied By Light

On the bottom of the light bulb is a number

indicating the watts it contains when in use. They may be anywhere from 25 watts to 100, 200 and up. The greater number of watts in the bulb the greater amount of power can pass through the bulb, giving a greater light.

Our lives, too, show light to others according to our connection to the source of power. Each day people are looking at us and reading us. The light bulb cannot talk but it can shine. The slogan that says *Actions speak louder*



than words is really true and sometimes it is not what we say for the Lord that counts, but what others see in us. Perhaps we cannot all be 200 watt bulbs. May be God has made us to be a little 25 watt, as there are times and places where a lesser light is needed. We would not put a 25 watt bulb in a very large room or it would not give sufficient light to

be useful. But a 200 watt is not needed in a small room for it would shine too brightly and be blinding. So we have to shine in the way God wants us to and where He wants, at the proper place and at the proper time. Just be ourselves and seek God's guidance in our life instead of trying to be like someone else. Our actions will reveal if we are truly shining for the Lord because His power sends the light from within and it shows in our relationship with others.

Direction – Sought

When you are looking for something you would not think of searching for it in a dark room but naturally switch on a light. Light is needed to reveal what we want to find. Many seamen and sailors' lives have been saved when out on the storm-tossed seas because they have seen the gleam of a lighthouse streaming from the shore, and many airplanes guided to a safe landing by lights shining in the darkness. We too give directions by our lives. No matter who we are, where we go, or what we do, we are an example to those around us. We may never get the same opportunity to be in the same place, with the same people again and we need to be sensitive to God's leading

to show His light to others by doing that little kindness or speaking a word for Him. Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 4:12 ... read

As we live our lives daily, may we be a good example to others, shining forth that we may give others the right direction to follow in their lives.

So, our lives can be easily compared to the light bulb. We must be connected to the Real Source of Power. Then we will shine as He wants us to, being an example as He was when He walked on this earth and showing others the right direction He would have them go.

As Jesus said in Matthew 5:16 - Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven.

Choruses

#203 The Light of the World is Jesus

Prayer Concerns

Closing Read together

Make This Your Daily Prayer

*Bless me, Heavenly Father,
forgive my erring ways.
Grant me strength to serve Thee,
put purpose in my days
Give me understanding,
enough to make me kind,
So I may judge all people
with my heart and not my mind.
And teach me to be patient in
everything I do;
Content to trust Your wisdom
and to follow after You
And help me when I falter,
and hear me when I pray
And receive me in Thy kingdom
to dwell with Thee someday.*



Saint me, Saint You

Celebrating All Saints Day

Deborah Coles, Simcoe Community Church, Ontario

Display:

- Books about saints. You can get stories like Joan of Arc or St. George the Dragon-slayer from the library. Website: saintspreserved.com/aboutsts.html
- Symbols of various saints: Flowers – Dorothy of Cappadocia; Deer – Francis of Assisi; Lion – Mark, the Evangelist; Loaf of Bread – Genevieve

Introduction: In the New Testament the word saint meant *Christian*. 2 Cor 13: 13. Nowadays, we tend to think of saints as people who lead particularly holy lives, or who dedicate their lives to caring for others in the service of Christ. As Salvationists, we are committed to living holy lives of service for Jesus that makes us saints! In this meeting, we want to remind ourselves of our status in Christ.

Readings - List of Saints

Taken from *On this day*, by Robert J. Morgan, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1997.

Polycarp
Brother Lawrence
William and Catherine Booth
Francis of Assisi
Athanasius
Patrick
Joan of Arc
George, the Dragon Slayer
Perpetua
Catherine of Sienna



History

Hallowe'en: October 31. All Hallows Eve was traditionally when children would dress up as saints, who would be honoured the next day in church. It was designed by the ancient church as a day of wholesome joy and reverence. True, the early church may have piggy-backed on pagan rituals.

All Saints Day: November 1. This was the day to celebrate the saints who have gone on before us, the *great cloud of witnesses* spoken of in Hebrews 12. We do not worship them, but we remember them and we honour the sacrifices they made.

We today are included among the saints, not because we are in ourselves holy, but because *God made Jesus, who had no sin, to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.* 2 Corinthians 5: 21. All of us who belong to Jesus have been made holy by his blood. Having sanctified us, God now sees us as saints. Our mission is to live up to God's view of us!

Devotions

The stories of the saints inspire us to find and use our gifts and graces for God. Their examples show us that we, too, can overcome in adversity. Knowing that God was there for them assures us that He will be there for us, too. When we suffer, we are not alone others have suffered patiently, we can too. When we succeed, again, we are not alone. We are walking in the footsteps of those who have gone ahead. *We should give thanks to God for them, and rejoice with them as members of the one body, so that we may be strongly provoked to place greater confidence in the grace of God for ourselves, and to follow the example of their faith.* Martin Bucer

Scripture:

- Hebrews 11 and 12 selected verses.
- Paul's letters refer to the saints in Romans 8:27
- Ephesians 1:1, 1:15, 1:18, 6:18
- Colossians 1:12

Yet we know that the Romans, the Ephesians and the Colossians were far from perfect - just like us!

One of the qualities that defined the saints of earlier days was their willingness to be tortured and even die for their faith. It is estimated that more Christians have been put to death on account of their faith in the 20th century than in all the other centuries put together. One example is Dietrich Bonhoeffer's execution. The prison doctor wrote:

"Through the half-open door in one of the huts I saw Pastor Bonhoeffer kneeling on the floor, praying fervently to his God. I was deeply moved by the way this lovable man was praying, so devoutly and so sure that God heard him. At the place of execution he again said a short prayer and then climbed the steps to

the gallows, brave and composed. His death ensued after a few moments. In the almost 50 years I worked as a doctor, I hardly ever saw a man die so submissive to the will of God."

From A Year with the Saints, by Mark Water, Random House, New York, Toronto, London, Sydney, Auckland, 1997, page 86.

An Old Story: A father took his little girl to a great cathedral. She was fascinated by the beautiful, colourful windows. Her father told her some of the stories that the pictures portrayed. *Now I know what a saint is, Daddy! she exclaimed. A saint is someone that the light shines through!*

Based on that idea, we can all be stained glass windows, letting the light of God's Son shine through us.

Stained Glass activity: activities can be a stained glass picture to colour! This can be purchased at a dollar store or book and bible store. Invest in new crayons for the occasion, donate them to the Sunday School when you're done! Artsy leaders might try using tissue paper bits and glue. Or ask your local stained glass hobbyist to come and demonstrate her art.

Quiz: Can the Saint in this picture be identified?. Prize could be a sun catcher, or even a prayer card with a picture of a saint and something written about them.

Songs that support the theme:

- Jesus wants me for a sunbeam 844/350
- All creatures of our God and King 2/45 Francis of Assisi
- Let nothing disturb thee 956/780 Teresa of Avila

Closing Benediction

Complete text available from Women's Ministries THQ

Preparation: Display pictures of castles, or use a Fisher-Price toy castle as your centrepiece if one is available.

Introduce theme:
refer to castle display

Refuge verses

1. Psalm 118:8
2. Psalm 27:1,5

Sharing time:

When you were a little kid, was there a safe place you went to when you were afraid or upset?

Word Search:

Use website <http://puzzlemaker.school.discovery.com/code/BuildWordSearch.asp> to create a puzzle.

Bible Study

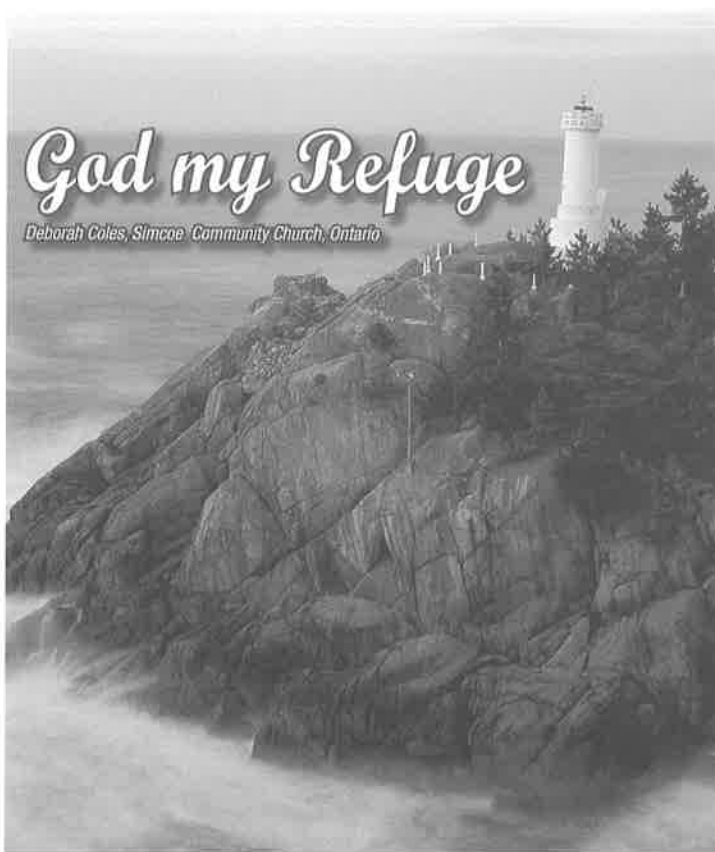
Tips on how to develop a refuge in your own home or yard.

Which space most appeals to you as a possible retreat or refuge? Bedroom, Deck, Kitchen, living room, Bathroom Allow time for answers

Ask ladies to share their ideas for making a *refuge* using the space and materials they have. You may want to use magazines to illustrate and inspire.

Bedroom

Keep it tidy. Invest in a pretty comforter or bedspread, or cushion. Make sure you have supportive pillows as well as adequate light,



so you can read in bed. Don't keep a TV or computer in your bedroom. Turn off outside influences and work. This room is your refuge. If you must have part of your bedroom as your office, find a way to shut it off - use a folding screen or even throw a sheet over your desk once you've finished with it. This reminds you that you are finished with it for now!

Have you ever actually used those pretty scented candles you sometimes receive as gifts? Or listened to that *relaxing music by the ocean CD*? Try it - pamper yourself just a little. Convince yourself that this room is your safe space.

Deck

There are many magazines, which you can borrow from your public library, on how to make your deck or balcony a welcoming,

cozy place. Make sure you have comfortable seating, shade from too much sun and a few really lovely pots of flowers and plants. When the weather is mild, you can sit outside, listen to the birds, and have your time alone with God.

Kitchen

Usually this is the busiest room in the house. But you might place a prayer basket in the centre of your table. When you have a chance to be alone, sit down and have a cup of tea with Jesus.

A prayer basket may contain: bible, devotional book, journal, pens and highlighters, and kleenex. Some people add stamped postcards to send to those they have prayed for.

Living room

Again, comfortable seating, adequate lighting and generally making everything as attractive and pleasant as possible will help you to feel comfortable, relaxed and secure. You don't have to have the whole room to yourself - many of us don't have that option. But make your corner work for you.

Bathroom

This is the most personal room in your home. As you care for your body, relish the quiet time, and the privacy. Ask the Father to wash away your sins as you shower! This is another ideal place for candles and the music you love most. Try taping a bible verse to your mirror, so you can meditate while you blow-dry your hair. This could be a place to display a suitable and fresh decorating craft.

Ask two ladies to read these verses:

- Psalm 118: 8,9
- Psalm 27:1, 5

Open

- If you could ask one thing of the Lord and have it granted, what would it be? Why don't you ask?
- How good are you at remembering faces? Why?

Read Psalm 27.

Dig

- What three qualities of God does David recall in verse 1? Explain
- How does each relate to David's confidence? vv. 2-3
- What clue does the repeated word seek give you into David's deepest desire? v. 4, 8
- Given David's experience with rejection, what seems to be most comforting about God's presence?

Refect

- How has the Lord been like a stronghold in your life in the past month?
- What situation has driven you to him to find shelter?

*Seek His face is echoed by Jesus in
Seek first the kingdom of God ...
Matthew 6:33. Is the seeking of
God's face/kingdom first happen-
ing in your life?*



In your love life with God,
where does he stand? Closer
to you than your own parents!
More like a distant relative you've
only heard about? Somewhere in
between? Why?

What will it take for you to become better
acquainted with him? More seeking? More
waiting? Explain.

Reflection

Host a Bone China Tea

Osteoporosis Society of Canada



Tea Time

The winter chill is fast approaching, and it's time to think about a cup of tea. Like fine bone china, our bones, though delicate, are surprisingly resilient if handled with care.

Once again, afternoon tea is becoming popular in North America for people of all ages. Share the elegant tradition of formal tea with your family and friends.

By hosting a *Bone China Tea* you will

- Provide your family and friends with calcium-smart refreshments
- Provide information about osteoporosis to your guests
- Help to raise funds for the Osteoporosis Society of Canada

The *Bone China Tea* is a fundraising event that is targeted to various audiences. Funds raised go toward providing support services and educational initiatives.

What is a Bone China Tea?

- A gathering of friends and family to enjoy the elegant tradition of a formal Tea
- Guests may dress up
- Hosts often offer refreshments - calcium-smart recipes are provided
- Guests receive valuable information about osteoporosis and their health - a presentation can be arranged
- Donations are requested to help further the efforts of the Osteoporosis Society of Canada

What is provided to help you host a Tea?

- Information guide
- Invitations and donation envelopes

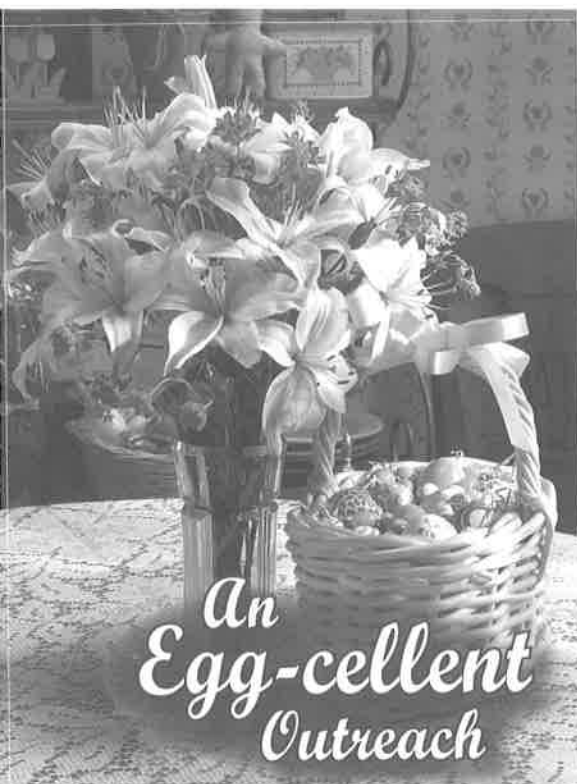
- Tea and sugar to be served
- Recipe cards from *The Everyday Calcium Cookbook*
- Educational materials about osteoporosis
- Receipts for donations over \$10
- Host gift

How to Become Involved?

- Write to the Osteoporosis Society of Canada, 33 Laird Drive, Toronto, ON, M4G 3S9
- Call 1 800 463 6842 for more information
- Fax 416 696 2673

Quick Facts about Osteoporosis

- Osteoporosis is a disease characterized by low bone mass and deterioration of bone tissue, causing bones to become thin and weak, leading to increased risk of fracture
- 1.4 million Canadians have Osteoporosis
 - 1 in 4 women over 50
 - at least 1 in 8 men over 50
- 2 million Canadians are at risk
- 70% of all hip fractures are osteoporosis related
- 25% of patients who fracture a hip die in less than one year
- Osteoporosis is called the silent thief because it gradually robs bones of strength over time
- There is no cure for osteoporosis, however there are treatments
- For more information on an event contact Women's Ministries Dept. THQ or the Osteoporosis Society of Canada through their website - <http://www.osteoporosis.ca>



Host an Easter egg hunt where your neighbours will find more than eggs. Elizabeth Greene, *Just Between Us*

The Christmas holidays have ended and wintry winds blow in full force, but retailers don't want consumers to enjoy a leisurely winter in front of a roaring fire. They eagerly remind shoppers that another important holiday will soon approach, Easter. By February, Easter bunnies and candy fill store shelves, but for Christians, the resurrection of Jesus and the promise of eternal life make this our most important and precious holiday. Why not make Easter a time to share the good news by planning your own neighbourhood outreach?

Many times our churches offer Christmas and Easter programs that are attended largely by believers. An event in your neighbourhood will bring Jesus to those

who may never enter the door of a church. What an opportunity! Romans 10:15 tells us *how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!* You can bring the good news to your neighbourhood by using these winter months to plan a spring outreach event. If many children live on the streets near you, begin planning an annual Easter egg hunt.

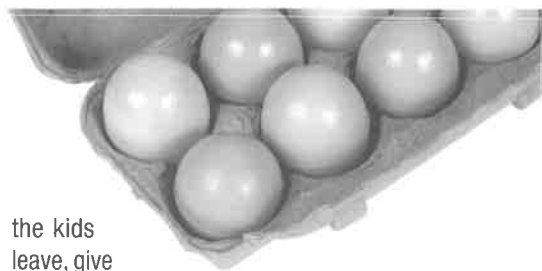
The real purpose of the Easter egg hunt is to share the true meaning of Easter, the resurrection of Jesus, in a fun, non-threatening, friendly environment with your neighbours. The egg hunt will get whole families there. The kids will enthusiastically hunt for eggs while moms and dads take pictures. The food and coffee will entice the adults to linger while kids play games. Each year you can build on your event because the kids will want to come back.

Before you host the egg hunt, pray that God will grow the seeds of faith that you are planting. Identify neighbours who are Christians or friends from church who could

Jellybean Poem

*Yellow is for heaven so bright,
The home for all who love Jesus - that's right!
Black is for the wrong we have done,
It separates God from everyone.
Red is for the blood Jesus gave
on the cross - to forgive our sins and save.
White shows us how clean we can be,
When we trust in Jesus eternally.
Green reminds me that I can grow,
As I read the Bible, Jesus I'll know.
Blue is for the sky God made,
I can worship Him every day.
Purple is the color of Royalty,
Thank you King Jesus for saving me!*





help you plan the event. Check the school calendar to ensure that the day you choose for your event doesn't conflict with another event or a school break when families will be away. The Saturday before Palm Sunday or the Saturday before Easter might work well for the hunt.

Incorporate food, games, an egg hunt, a story, and a gospel giveaway into your party.

Passover Poem

*Orange is for the bush burning bright,
And the call of Moses to lead the Israelites.
Yellow is for the words Moses told to
The Pharaoh - Listen up, let my people go!
Red is for the blood of the Nile.
Green is for the frogs so vile.
Black is for the darkened land.
White is for the Passover lamb.
Blue is for the parted sea,
I AM led the Israelites to liberty.*



*A bag full of jellybeans colourful and sweet,
is a prayer, is a promise, is a special treat.*

Three weeks before the event, distribute the invitations to your neighbours clearly stating your intentions. Explain that you will have an Easter egg hunt and some breakfast food for the adults. Invite families who don't have young kids to participate in the adult-focused events. If you are going to read the kids the Easter story, let the parents know, so they aren't surprised at the spiritual component to your party.

The day before the hunt, have parents drop off at your home one dozen plastic eggs per child filled with candy. Saturday morning hide the eggs, set out the coffee and donuts, lay out name tags, and mingle. Read the Easter story from a children's bible, hunt for eggs, play games, and enjoy your neighbours. Before

the kids leave, give them each a jellybean poem and an Easter tract or short book from your local Christian bookstore. Then pray that God will open up doors of opportunity for you to have spiritual discussions with your neighbours.

There were times when Jesus gathered alone with His disciples and other times when He sent them out to proclaim the good news of His Kingdom. A neighbourhood Easter egg hunt is an egg-cellent way to fulfill the great commission of Christ to *go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation* Mk. 16:15.

Helpful Hints

Do you have teenagers who can help plan your egg hunt? Put them to work. Let them hide the eggs or read the Easter story from a children's bible. Ask teens to facilitate relay games such as carrying an egg on a spoon or hopping on one foot while carrying an Easter basket.

Give away several grand prizes like the Resurrection Eggs, an Easter video or a children's book about Easter. Include a Moses video for Jewish friends. You can pick up all these items at a discount the Monday after Easter at clearance sales.

Ideas for Outreach

Give away little packs of jellybeans with colors to match each poem. If there are Jewish families in the neighbourhood, include a Passover poem. Provide an Easter coloring page and a Passover coloring page (see www.torah tots.com).

I Love to Tell the Christmas Story

The holidays can be a time of frustration, exhaustion and depression. Or they can serve as a season of celebration, expectation, and inspiration. If you're seeking ways to promote peace and keep the holidays holy, tell the Christmas story. Here are some suggestions to get you started:

- **A Story Party.** Invite people over for a share-a-story potluck. Each person brings a favourite dish and a favourite Christmas tale to tell. You can end by telling the true Christmas story.
- **Neighbourhoods Nativity.** Spread the word that you're hosting a live nativity scene on your lawn or at



your corps. Specify the time and night you'd like participants to show up. Provide inexpensive bathrobe-type attire and stuffed farm animals. Play Christmas carols. Write tracts with the Christmas story to hand out.

- **A Birthday Party for Jesus.** This could be accomplished with the assistance of several young adults. Put up posters, distribute flyers. A couple of mothers can throw a birthday party for Jesus and invite neighbourhood kids and their parents. A suggested craft could be angel ornaments out of salt dough. A birthday cake for refreshment. Goodie bags full of small items from a Christian bookstore for the children is an excellent way to reach out to the neighbours during the season.

Creative Outreach Ideas For The Holidays

- **Give-Away Ornaments.** Make some gift ornaments as a family. Choose an ornament that is simple and non-perishable. Be sure it has a Christian meaning like an angel. Attach an appropriate Bible verse to each ornament. When they are done, pray with your kids, asking God to help those who receive them understand more about what Christmas is all about.
- **Wrap-It-Up-Night.** For family, neighbours, new moms, or people who are elderly or ill, offer to come to their homes and wrap presents and help with other holiday preparations. You can also reach out by helping with baking or cleaning. Be sure to include your children so they can see what giving to others is all about.
- **Seasoning With Comfort.** For many people the holidays are an especially painful time of year, particularly for those who have recently lost loved ones. Ways to reach out to others during this time of year might include: sending an encouraging card, mentioning memories you have of their loved one, inviting him or her to lunch to listen, or encouraging other friends to drop notes in the mail throughout the Christmas season.



A Reason for the Season



For young children, December is a thrilling month of anticipating gifts and goodies. Sometimes the real meaning gets tossed aside with the wrappings. Make Jesus the center of the celebration with a neighbourhood Christmas party designed to point children to Him. Find a large room. Hand out invitations. Include parents as well and let the celebration begin!

As the children arrive, help them construct a simple Christmas ornament; painting wooden ornaments, decorating paper stars, Christmas card cut-outs. Play active games. Vary games depending on age. A nativity at the end of the room to remind children about Joseph and Mary's trip to Bethlehem.

Another game, No Room at the Inn, is suspiciously like musical chairs. Play Christmas music as the kids march, and then stop the music as they scramble for chairs. Explain that, because Bethlehem's inns were full, Jesus was born in a dark, smelly stable.

Next, spend a few minutes singing Christmas carols. If you can provide rhythm instruments such as bells, shakers and drums, you'll discover what a joyful noise sounds like!

For the devotional, display a filled Christmas stocking. Ask the kids what they think is inside. As you take the following items out of the stocking:

- **A wrapped gift.** Open it to reveal chocolate kisses, one for each child. Explain that God's great love-gift was His Son. Romans 6:23
- **A baby Jesus figure or tiny doll.** Explain where Jesus was born. Luke 2:6-7
- **An angel ornament.** The angels announced the good news of Jesus' birth. Luke 2:10-11

- **Talk about the colours of the stocking** representing sin and holiness Isaiah 1:18
- **A lamb.** The shepherds hurried to see Jesus. He is the Lamb of God and our Good Shepherd. Luke 2:15-16
- **Gold, A gold beaded garland.** Wise men came, bringing gifts to honour Jesus. Matthew 2:11
- **A cross.** Jesus lived a sinless life, died and rose again so we can live forever. Romans 5:8
- **A candy cane.** The red reminds us of Jesus' blood; the white, of His purity. The shape a J or a shepherd's staff reminds us of Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Matthew 1:21
- **A bell.** Spread this good news! Luke 2:17-18
- **A candle.** Light a candle. Jesus is the Light of the World. John 8:12



Next, the kids can reinforce these concepts by assembling their own treat bags to take home. Guide them in placing the following items, along with a small printed card explaining what they represent into a treat bag. Include a children's tract.

- **A star cookie**
- **Chocolate kisses**
- **A candy cane**
- **A wrapped popcorn ball or package of popcorn**
- **A bell cookie**

Serve refreshments - either cookies and juice, or a birthday cake for Jesus.

For a complete script contact Women's Ministries at THQ.

Christmas Parties That Travel



spend time talking to people one on one, and ask them to tell you what Christmas was like in their youth. The gift of your time and listening ear may be the most precious gift they receive at Christmas.

The Christmas season is upon us. Your calendars are quickly filled with holiday activities. But before you schedule your usual small-group think about doing something different this year — such as taking your party on the road. How?

- **Cheer for Children.** Load up on children's Christmas books, and *invade*, with permission, the pediatric ward of your local hospital. Read to the kids and distribute holiday coloured balloons, candy canes, inexpensive toys. If your group talents permit it, lead the children in singing Christmas songs, or present an age-appropriate skit for their entertainment. Leave the books for the children to enjoy, perhaps even giving them as presents.



- **Bake-a-thon.** Gather at the home of the group member with the biggest kitchen, and spend the day baking homemade bread for a **homeless shelter or soup kitchen.** Stick to hearty, whole-grain loaves that will pack plenty of nutritional punch. Wrap in plastic wrap and tie ribbons around finished loaves.
- **Flower Power.** Take small poinsettias to nursing home residents. Spread out,

- **Christmas Crafts.** Is your group crafty? One group, whose members were skilled in knitting and crocheting, dedicated one evening a week for four weeks to making mittens, scarves, hats, and socks. Homeless shelters, crisis pregnancy centers, and shelters for battered women appreciate such gifts.
- **Holiday Hammers.** If Habitat for Humanity is building a home near you, replace your Christmas party with a work day at a Habitat project. Brighten the day for other volunteers by wearing holiday duds and bringing a boom box and Christmas tapes. Bring enough Christmas cookies to fuel yourselves and your coworkers.
- **Church Elves.** Volunteer as a group to help with one of your church's seasonal outreach projects, such as delivering presents for Project Angel Tree, which collects and distributes gifts to the children of prisoners. Organize such an activity.



The Christmas season is insanely busy for most of us. But before you groan at the thought of adding one of these activities to your calendar, remember that these outreach projects would replace your regular Christmas party. You're not taking on more — you're just taking your party on the road.

An Evening in Paris

Linda Bradbury

This program could be easily adapted for use as an evening fellowship, for couples or a Home League.

Advertise the evening well. Don't keep it a secret.

Preparation

Create the atmosphere of a sidewalk café with cloth covered tables. With a theatrical back drop, trees, lanterns, colourful flowers to create the sidewalk café illusion. Some of these decorations may be obtained from travel shows, agencies in the community or the following websites:

www.photo.net/France/Paris,
[www.exploitz.com/pages/
regions/westerneurope/france](http://www.exploitz.com/pages/regions/westerneurope/france)

Someone might be able to paint on a strip of plain wallpaper a tall glittering replica of the Eiffel Tower, surrounded by artificial plants, greens, flowers to create a park-like setting.

Have a couple of ladies act as female vendors in French dress, dark skirts and striped blouses and be at the entrance and hand each lady a long stem rose from a flower cart. Provide background music with French melodies.

Refreshments

Serve a full course authentic French dinner with menus on table or French hors d'oeuvres, pastries, grape juice, during this time provide the following commentary on this great city.



An overview of the city of Paris, France. This could be a powerpoint with photos and commentary.

The City of Lights

Paris is a city with a distinct international flavour. Called the city for lovers, it continually has a romantic draw all its own. It is also known as the city of lights and after a view of Paris at night one can attest to the fact that is correct. It sparkles and twinkles beneath the night sky like a bright jewel.

Home of Artists

Artists flood the streets of Paris. Beginners, talented, those with no talent at all. It does not matter. They come to Paris to live, work, walk the same streets of the Masters.

If you are not an artist but a lover of art this is the most fascinating city to tour. Whether your taste in art runs from conservative to slightly bizarre, there will be galleries to enjoy.



History Lovers

If history and antiques are your passion then you will never want to leave Paris. Cobble streets from as long ago as the days of Roman Empire can still be trod upon by commoners. Sculpture and the baths from this time exist as well.

Paris is steeped in all things Medieval. Magnificent buildings such as Notre Dame and the Louvre are wonderful examples of architecture during the Middle Ages. Kings and Queens tore down and built palaces and churches throughout the ages and superb artefacts are on display that remain, long after the men and women who wore the crowns were gone.

Paintings, furniture, sculptures, medieval tapestries made by mortal hands reside in the museums in Paris.

The Louvre

The Louvre itself is reason enough to visit Paris. Objects of art adorn the walls from all over the world. It was once a simple fortress but today a stunning palace.

Magnificent Structures

What would Paris be without the Eiffel Tower, the L'arche de Triomphe, the beautiful gardens surrounding the Champs-Elysées as well as the breathtaking beauty of Notre Dame.

Areas of Diversity

Walking through Paris is like walking through a cultural wonderland. Outdoor markets, lesser known museums and local lore make each area a place of interest.

It would be easy to spend days on end absorbing the scintillating atmosphere and wondrous treasures that are so Paris. One would never get enough.

Ideas for Entertainment

Invite in local high school students who excel in the French language and give each table a quick French lesson.

Hello – *Bonjour*

Good Night – *Bon soir*

How are You – *Comment allez-vous*

Thank you – *Merci*

Pleased to meet you – *Enchanté (e)*

Goodbye – *Au revoir*

Please – *s'il vous plait*

Award a prize for the one who can recall the most of the lesson throughout the evening.

Display of Fashion Industry.

Have you ever wondered why designer clothes like Jean Paul Gaultier, Christian Dior, Pierre

Cardin or Coco Chanel are so attractive and popular and why people have been attracted to fashion for centuries? Throughout history French society always gave a large importance to clothes. A small fashion show with clothes from these well known French designs would be fun. Usually boutiques are very interested. Almost every store carries designs by these famous designers.

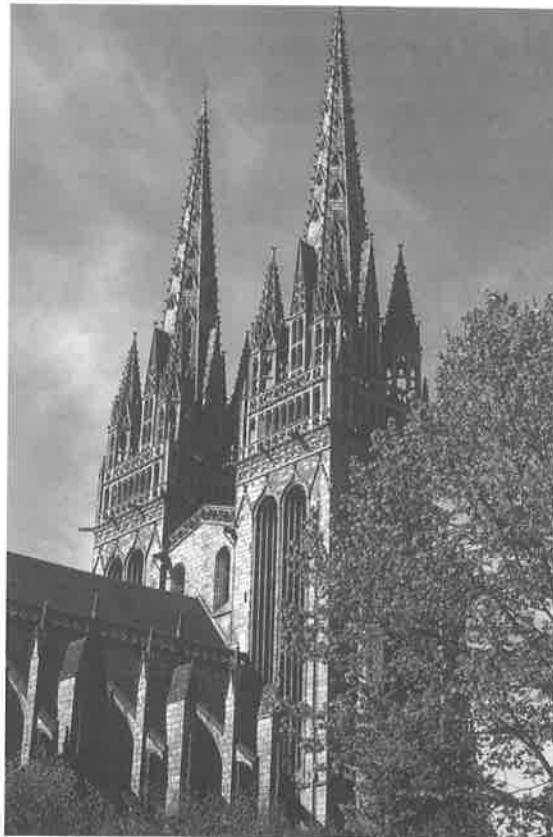
French Painting

Invite an artist with easel, paints and block painting jacket to set up in the area and paint, sketch someone in the group that evening. At the end, present the painting to that individual.

An art or poetry contest could be held.

Devotions - Micah 6: 8

Colonel Eleanor Shepherd



Paris is the city of lights. When you drive down the Champs Elysée at Christmas time, it looks like a fairyland. Millions of white lights garland the trees that line this impressive avenue. Paris is also a city of contrasts. Riding the subway to visit the magnificent Musée d'Orsay, mothers with little children accost you, plaintively begging for money to buy food for their hungry children. Their dress confirms that they are immigrants and likely do not have the right to any of the benefits of citizens. You know they have come to Paris likely seeking refuge from even worse circumstances. In the midst of splendour, there is crying need.

Paris is so typical of our world today. In the midst of the greatest affluence and beauty,

there is want. There is hunger and need. This is where the Lord calls us to be His presence. We cannot dramatically alter the situations of the masses but by His grace we can offer hope and courage one person at a time, in an immense European city like Paris or in a rural Canadian community. By the grace of God's presence within us, we can bring hope, one kindly deed at a time.

Sing songs from the Musicales:

I Love Paris
Les Misérables
Miss Saigon
South Pacific

Refreshments

The Verity Experience

A Club with a Difference

Once a month Mary Atken, owner and manager of Verity Club in Toronto's downtown historical Queen Richmond Centre on Queen Street East offers Regent Park women a place for mentoring and empowering. The standards of services of a private, exclusive club are in place. But, it's not about being haughty, it's the opposite. It's about making people feel welcome and relaxed. It's an opportunity for women to comment, brain storm, relax and have fun. It's all about reaching out into the community. Verity's mentoring program for Regent Park women began in 2004 when private club members served 100 women and children a Christmas dinner with all the trimmings on white linen tablecloths and napkins along with beautifully wrapped gifts, and personal attention.

Today, Regent Park women where Major Sandra Ryan is the Corps Officer, come to the club once a month, for a Verity Opportunity as a way to celebrate personal growth and special challenges. The 6.5 million dollar club opened in February 2004 to the public. The club's George's Restaurant has become one of the premier dining establishments in the city.

Women from the Regent Park 614 congregation of The Salvation Army are drawn into the club by a mentoring program that reflects the owner's sensitive needs of all women.

Each month the Corps Officer selects from hundreds of women in her community with whom she's connected in the downtown core, offering the Verity Opportunity as a way to celebrate who they are.

As the owner of the Verity Club reaches out to Ryan's Regent Park women, her goal is to



make them all feel welcome and empowered. Her staff provides the mentoring and empowering services on a volunteer basis. Some of her mentors include Designer-Manufacturers, Investment Bankers, Media staff, Columnists, Health Care professionals.

To begin with, as Christmas approached last year, Atkins was not only reaching out to the rich and famous of her club, but also the community at large. She contacted Ryan who ministers at Regent Park and offered to host a Christmas party for 100 women and children at the restaurant. Her private members volunteered to set up and serve for the event on Christmas Day. The women were overwhelmed with the personal care and service, the likes of which they had never experienced before.

From there the once a month Verity opportunity was offered to Ryan and her women.

The once a month Sunday is fully equipped with Verity mentors, coffee, muffins, spa, professional make up artist, pool, steam room, lunch at Georges Restaurant.

An incredible group of women meet from diverse backgrounds and challenges to experience Atkins' personal touch and encouragement. A club with a difference reaching out to the community mentoring and empowering women.

Good Night Angel



Opportunity to reach
out to Mother/Child



A mother's learning curve spikes during the months preceding and following the birth of a child. This window of opportunity offers a time-sensitive opportunity to reach newly-emerging families for Christ.

Best-selling author of more than 35 children's books Dr. Mary Manz Simon and named "one of America's top parenting pros ..." by *McCall's* magazine. Dr. Manz Simon regularly consults and writes articles for *Focus on the Family* Ministries.

How is Good Night Angel used?

The Obvious Use

- Used as a gift for people, church visitors, who are seekers or those with small children ages 1 to 5 years.

- Dedication of young children.



Less Obvious Applications - Outreach

- Women of the church carrying CD's in hand bags giving them to friends, relatives and fellow employees who are expectant and young mothers.
- Meeting young mothers in public places such as play groups, restaurants and community programs.
- Experience shows where parents of young children are most appreciative and receptive to this kind of outreach.

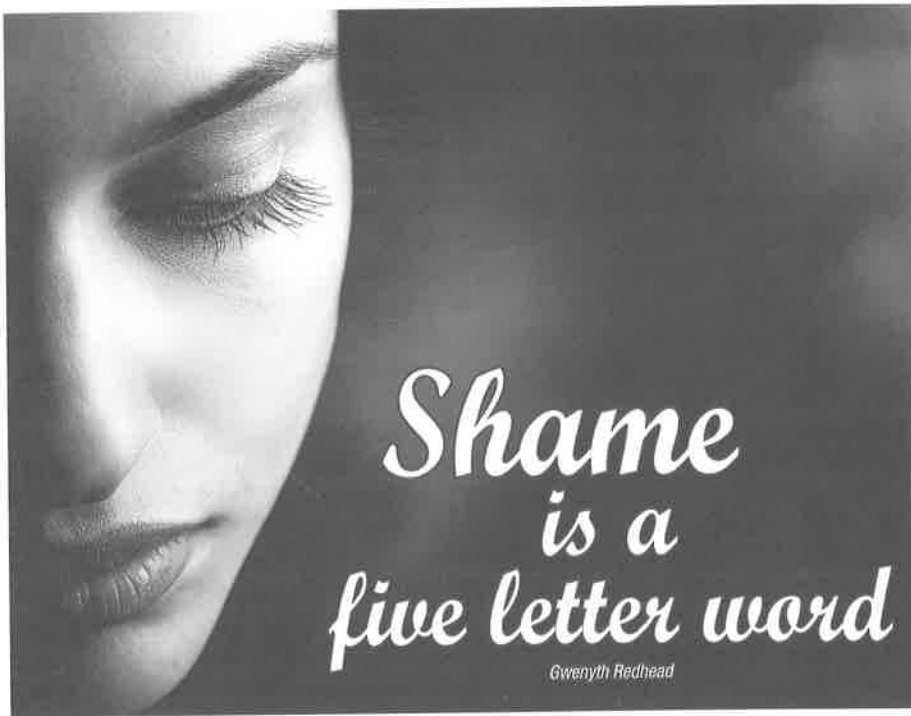
- Church groups give to maternity patients at local hospitals.

Grand River Hospital in Kitchener, Ontario, has been distributing Good Night Angel CD's to mothers in their hospital for the past two years. Churches sponsor usually 100 CD's at a time so that *Good Night Angel* can be offered to each new mother. Most mothers do accept this gift. When the CD is opened, a sticker label reads A gift of love from ... (your church name) and website. A church may also include information of programs that their church offers for young families. A disclaimer label may be placed on the inside cover of the CD stating that they do not endorse the product but are glad to offer this to patients

- Giving a copy of *Good Night Angel* to expectant women in businesses such as franchise restaurants and stores.



For further details on how to purchase Good Night Angel contact www.tobiascom.com or Women's Ministries Dept. THQ



(Enter woman running as if from church)

I'm sorry, Lord. I'm so sorry. I just couldn't stay in there. Not when I saw the order of service.

But at least I made it **inside** the church this time! A bit farther than last week. And you know how hard I tried then, Lord — that I might have made it if I'd timed my arrival a little bit better, and not bumped into quite so many people on that long walk from the parking lot.

Janet's look wasn't too bad. Curious more than anything. Knowing I haven't been feeling too well recently, and not wanting to ask in case two and two really **did** make four.

But I could feel the colour start to creep up my neck when Sue and Melanie caught my eye — and then looked hastily away. They

obviously thought they had figured out my diagnosis, and didn't know how to handle it.

And the feelings of shame just about overwhelmed me by the time I reached Helen and Elaine. I couldn't miss the steely glint in their eyes. They were not only convinced that they knew, for sure, the nature of my disease, they had also hashed out together how I had contracted it.

I don't know how I'd have made it home if I hadn't sensed your presence so close to me in the car, as I tried to drive with tears streaming down my face. And it's been truly wonderful to work the whole process through with you this week; to share with you the inner ache I feel because of the ignorance and ignominy that surrounds my illness and makes it almost too hard to bear; far harder than the sense of hopelessness that threatens to envelope me

every day. And then to hear you say to me over and over again: *"Go in peace. Your faith has saved you."*, 'til you finally got me to the place where I was willing to give it another go.

And the irony is that I haven't done too badly out in the world, this week. I've found, just as you did, that people "out there" are often far less judgmental and narrow minded than many of the people "in there!" (*pointing to church*) Perhaps it's because so many of them feel shame, too, maybe because they're also seen to be "different" - because they're solo moms, or divorced, or physically challenged.

Part of me wants to call it quits with this place and spend my time among them, instead. Put myself in a self-chosen exile rather than struggling with the feelings of shame that I have to contend with every time I come here. And yet, there's another part of me that still longs for community — community with fellow-Christians — with people who would look at me with **your** eyes, and touch me with **your** hands.

That's why I fled from the service this morning — I couldn't face the possibility of being rejected today of all days! I wonder why the pastor chose that topic, and that reading and that song? Was it because today has been proclaimed, world-wide, as a day to increase awareness of my illness?

"Body-Life" What a theme! What a prayer! What a scripture! Drawing attention to the fact that you did not intend your people to be **like** a body, but to **be** the very body of Christ, himself, in the world. And that just as in a human body, when one part suffers, the whole body suffers, so it should be with the church. If only that were true!

Lord, if a theme like that causes **me** such

pain, because practice doesn't line up with preaching, how must it make **you** feel?

Yes, yes, I hear you. You share my shame. In my heart of hearts I know that's true. And that's what makes it bearable. Makes me want to give it just one more try. But I can't, not today.

Will you help me again, like you did last week? I promise I will try again when I feel strong enough. Maybe, just maybe, the concept of "Body-Life" **will** get through to some of those I thought were my friends.

Lord, I really want to believe it's possible. You know better than I do that there is nothing that would give me greater comfort than to be a part of an authentic representation of your body, especially when the weight starts to drop off and the lesions start to form.



(*Turns to church*) Is it too much to hope that at least some of them will think of me as they sing: *"There is only one God, there is only one King, there is only one body, that is why we sing, Bind us together, Lord, bind us together, Lord, bind us together with love?"*

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When Teens Turn Away



I don't want to be a Christian anymore. Unfortunately, many teens echo those words as they flounder in their faith. During such tumultuous times, teenagers and their parents need loving support from the body of Christ instead of judgment and a cold shoulder.

First, consider the struggling teens.

Try the following ideas as you reach out to them with unconditional love and acceptance.



➤ **Send cards.** After Lisa received the birthday card I mailed her, her mother related Lisa's comment to me: Wow! No one sends me birthday cards! On holidays, send a surprise greeting with candy or coupons to a fast-food restaurant.

➤ **Show personal interest.** Attend their music, drama, or sports events. Invite them on a lunch date.

➤ **Offer opportunities for teens to use their talents.** Ask Jim, who has an artistic bent, to make posters advertising youth events. Invite Jenny to participate in the youth dramas. Approach Derrick about playing his bass guitar on the worship team. Or encourage teens to help in the church nursery, serve food at the city mission, or participate in servant evangelism projects, such as handing out free cans of pop at the park.



➤ **Ask for opinions.** *What did you think about the message today? How do you think we could improve the youth group?*

Your questions reveal your respect for them and help them feel valued. However, be prepared for negative responses from time to time. Do not become defensive.

➤ **Practice friendliness.** One parent admitted, *Most adults are turned off by or afraid of my daughter's dyed hair and gothic clothes.* Determine to extend warmth: a smile, a hug, or a pat on the back. Take the time to get to know them.



Second, comfort the struggling parents.

Use the following ideas with humility and gentleness.

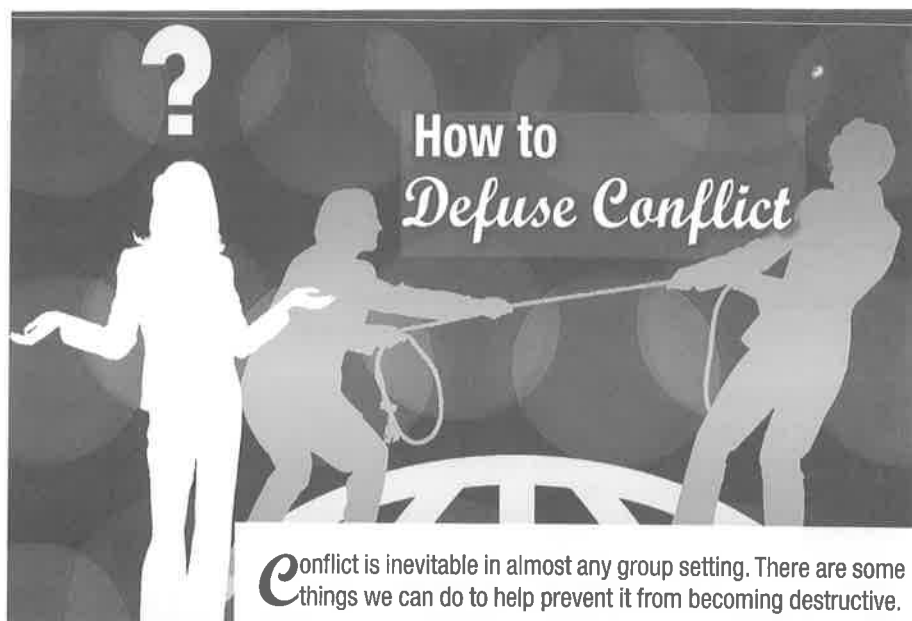
➤ **Acknowledge their pain.** Expressing your concern builds a bridge, offering parents an opportunity to share frustrations and hurts. Listen. Resist defending or condemning either side.

➤ **Offer books and articles** that give testimonies about how other parents survived. E.g. *Parents in Pain* by John White.

➤ **Combat their negative feelings** of guilt, self-doubt, and blame with affirmation. Help rebuild their confidence and self-worth by expressing appreciation or admiration for their generosity, patience, faithfulness, etc.

➤ **Pray for them,** and let them know you're praying. Send an encouragement card with appropriate scriptures to help heal their hearts





Keep short accounts. People often say and do things that irk us. Sometimes we can overlook this and chalk it up to their being just human or ourselves being a little touchy. But when there is a deep emotional reaction to a comment or action, we benefit from approaching the person and talking about it. Otherwise, the hurt turns to resentment, and our respect for that person begins to cool. This leaves the door open for further to disagreement and separation.

Speak honestly. Sometimes when we discuss our concerns with others we fall victim to *chronic niceness*. We work so hard not to offend and to say it right that by the time it reaches the ears of the hearer it is superficial. It has been so distilled that the real issues lie buried in our hearts. Without honesty, however difficult it may be, we can't address the root of our conflict, and we continue to show aloofness of heart toward that person.

Remember that your view is your view. You have been given a single porthole through which to view life. It is a valuable porthole, unique to you, but it only exposes you to a portion of the ocean. It is not the ultimate view,

nor is it the superior view. Don't discount its value to you, but don't exaggerate its value to others.

Commit to self-examination. Jesus said that if we took the beams out of our own eyes we would see clearly to help our brothers. As long as we are not addressing our own issues we will have trouble seeing things objectively enough to help the situation. Why? Because we are protecting a fragile self-image based upon being right.

Removing the beam is not a journey into shame and self-condemnation, but one into the truth. That truth frees us to look honestly at the personal attitudes and behaviours that may contribute to conflict.

Remember the Lord. It is easy to become so immersed in what we are doing that I forget the whom. For whom am I pursuing this course of action? For whom am I guarding this procedure or approach to ministry? Remembering that Jesus is Lord and that the Christian community belongs to Him frees me from desperately clinging to my way.

The Coming Storm

Miriam Mills

What did Mary feel when meeting Gabriel face-to-face?
Did his message even register in the light of Heaven's grace?
Did the handmaid of God understand?
Mary, mother Mary,
Your heart will swell and break beneath God's loving hand.
*Was it at that moment-that precious, holy moment
That God braced the faith of Mary
For the coming storm?*

What did Peter feel when he first stepped from the boat?
When his eyes were fixed on Jesus and his faith kept him afloat.
Did the fierce wind tear his courage away?
Peter, brother Peter,
You'll fear and fall again before the break of day.
*Was it at that moment-that fleeting, holy moment
That God braced the faith of Peter
For the coming storm?*

What did Lazarus feel when he woke inside the tomb?
Did he panic when the glory was torn from him so soon?
Was he loath to face mere sunshine once again?
Lazarus, beloved,
Your feet have strolled upon a higher, nobler plain.
*Was it at that moment-that mystic, holy moment
That God braced the faith of Lazarus
For the coming storm?*

What did Jesus feel when the nails pierced flesh and bone?
When His Father's face was turned-could He bear the pain alone?
Would He finish now the Maker's perfect plan?
Jesus, Saviour Jesus,
Your pitying heart could not abandon fallen man.
*Was it at that moment-that priceless, holy moment
That God braced the faith of Jesus
For the coming storm.*

*And in this very moment-this quiet, holy moment
I pray that God will brace my faith
For the coming storm.*





Teaching The Tough Ones

Teach Sunday school to teenagers in a low-income, high-crime neighbourhood. Often I'm tempted to believe I'm never going to reach them. But God has given me these strategies which have helped me persevere and make a dent in the lives of these troubled kids.

- **Be gentle.** Avoid harsh demands and imperative statements. These seem to set up a resistance. Say kindly, let's do this, instead of harshly demanding, do it now.
- **Listen.** I've learned so much as I've let troubled young people tell me about their lives. I echo their views back to them and let them know I appreciate their openness — even when I disagree.
- **Use creative lesson plans.** The kids I teach tend to forget what they hear and remember what they see. I use sign language, short dramas, pantomimes, and object lessons to help them stay attentive. For example, one week I brought a rock and a sponge to teach about hardened and softened hearts. At the end of the lesson, I let the student who paid closest attention squeeze the water-soaked sponge over my head.
- **Notice what they do right.** Most of the young people I teach already feel inadequate: "I'm a bad kid from a bad family living in a bad neighbourhood." It does no good to focus on flaws. I try to catch the kids doing right and let them know how much I appreciate positive behaviour. I assign small jobs so I can praise good work.
- **Take low reading levels into account.** Some kids are terribly embarrassed by their reading skills. In large groups, I've learned not to appoint a reader; instead ask, "Who wants to read?" If I'm with one or two students, I encourage poor readers to read, and then I praise them for the words they get right.
- **Get to know their world.** I ask kids about favourite music and movies to learn what messages they're receiving. I give them freedom to talk about what's happening on the streets. Then I incorporate what they tell me into the lessons. One time I took a favourite rap song, put godly words to it, and sang it. They were thrilled. I also offer Christian alternatives to secular music and movies.
- **Have patience.** I like the saying I heard recently: "You are planting seeds for a tree you'll never sit under." Keeping my focus on God and staying prayerful helps me wait for Him to bring results.
- **Maintain a humble attitude.** Remaining humble means being transparent about God's dealing with my past and present sins and allows me to see the giftedness in each young person I meet.

Show a Shut-in That You Care

God has stated that true religion is to remember the widow and orphan, but many of our elderly and infirm feel forgotten and abandoned. No longer able to attend church, they find themselves out of sight and out of mind.

Here are some suggestions for changing that.

- **Give the gift of company.** Visit, individually or in small groups. When time or circumstances won't allow a visit, use the phone or drop a note in the mail. Remember important dates such as birthdays and holidays.
- **Invite them to a special event.** Whether a wedding, a baby shower, or the third-grade class play, the joy our elderly experience in attending is well worth the difficulty of manoeuvring a wheelchair, they fit in a standard car trunk or an oxygen tank or accommodating special restroom needs.
- **Deliver music.** Church musicians and worship groups can bring great joy to nursing home residents by simply rehearsing at the homes of shut-ins. Although they are small in number, they are big on appreciation. Your presence will delight them alone.
- **Share news.** Like the rest of us, shut-ins love hearing of engagements, pregnancies, and the cute mistake that adorable three year old made in the Christmas pageant.
- **Bring food.** So many elderly depend on meals-on-wheels. However the institutional taste of the food is not always appetizing. Receiving homemade soup or a casserole



is delightful, especially accompanied by your presence.

- **Include well-behaved children on visits.** Many elderly people never get to be around young children. Their isolation deprives them of the simple joy of holding a baby, watching a toddler learn to walk, or hearing a 10 year old brag about his latest home run. Prepare the children for the visit. Bring a pet.
- **Invite them to serve.** Ask elderly people if they would like to be part of a prayer chain, assist with a hot line, or crochet baby clothes for unwed mothers. Just because they are homebound does not mean they are useless.
- **Pray for them.** Write down their requests, then get your small group or congregation to pray. Let them know you prayed, and ask how God has answered.

Load-Lifters for Parents of Disabled Kids

How might you and your church lighten the load of the parents of disabled children? Here are some helpful tips.

- **Offer to clean house.**
- **Take dinner once or twice a week.**
- **Provide baby-sitting** so that a parent can escape one morning a week to linger over a cup of coffee with a friend or hunt for garage sales. Care-takers eliminate the stress of having to cart an entire clan to the doctor when one child is sick. It frees parents to join a couples' bible study.



- **Guard your tongue.** Parents often feel their children's sorrow and disappointment, especially parents of the disabled. Be aware of how to address children with disabilities. Quite often their self esteem is very fragile. Talk to children with disabilities as you would talk to your own kids. Ask how's school going? or what have you been doing for fun?
- **Embrace disabled kids.** Parents are blessed when they know their children feel accepted. Resist shying away from these children or treating them differently.
- **Exercise muscles.** When families arrive with disabled kids at your corps/church, have teams to unload kids' wheelchairs. On rainy days, escort families with umbrellas.





The Prayer Vase

Norma Stuckless

Does God answer prayer? Sometimes the fact that *yes, He does*, goes unnoticed. An effective way of keeping track and being more aware of answered prayer is to use a prayer Vase. Select a unique vase or bowl, something that is outstanding and eye catching. Place it in a prominent place in the living room. Then on small slips of coloured paper record answers to prayer and place in the vase. It is absolutely amazing how quickly they accumulate. This collection is not only an encouragement to you and a reminder of God's faithfulness and goodness, but it also gives opportunity to witness. As people come to your home and see this exquisite container with the slips of paper in it, many will ask questions about it. Then you have the awesome opportunity of sharing your faith and telling of God's goodness and love. Try it and be amazed!



For your Reading Pleasure

Spiritual Growth

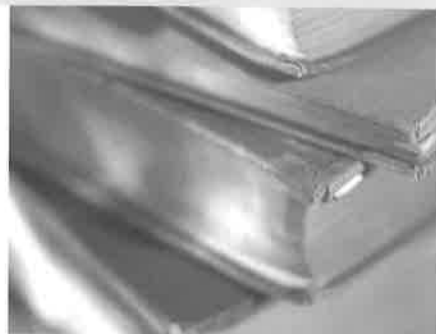
- *The Prayer of Jabez for Women*, Darlene Wilkinson
- *The Case for the Creator*, Lee Strobel
- *The Case for Christ*, Lee Strobel
- *Praying God's Will for Your Life*, Stormie Omartian
- *Praying God's Will for Life: Workbook and Journal*, Stormie Omartian
- *Experiencing the Passion of Jesus: Discussion Guide*, Lee Strobel & Garry Poole
- *Believing God*, Beth Moore
- *God's Woman*, Roy B. Lisath
- *The Signature of Jesus*, Brennan Manning
- *The Martyr's Song*, Ted Dekker

Resources

- *It's not about my Bike*, Lance Armstrong
- *The Money Mission: How to find money for your Women's Ministry*, Pamela Christian with Rebekah Montgomery
- *Secrets to planning a successful Big Event*, Karen Porter
- *15 Minutes Alone with God*, Emilie Barnes
- *A Life God Rewards for Little Ones*, (Board Book)

Parenting

- *The Five Minute Parent Fun & Fast for You and Your Little Ones*, Deborah Shelton
- *The five Love Languages of Children*, Gary Chapman & Ross Campbell, M.D.
- *The five Love Languages of Teenagers*, Gary Chapman



- *Bringing up Boys*, Dr. James Dobson
- *Boundaries With Kids*, Dr. Henry Cloud; Dr. John Townsend
- *Sins of the Family*, Tauke Beverly Hubble

Relationships

- *15 Minute Devotions for Couples*, Bob & Emilie Barnes
- *365 Meditations for Couples*
- *For Women Only – book and discussion guide*, Shaunti Feldhahn
- *The Sister Circle*, Vonette Bright & Nancy Moser
- *Approval Addiction*, Joyce Meyer, Warner Faith (Publisher)

Fiction

- *Monster*, Frank Peretti
- *Moonlight on the Millpond*, Lori Wick, Harvest House (Publisher)

Videos/DVD's

- *Veggie Tales – Lord of the Beans*
- *The Pond*, Isaac Entertainment

Music CD's

- *All Things New*, Steven Curtis Chapman
- *Ultimate Worship – The Passion Collection*

Useful Websites

This list contains Internet Websites that provide suggestions for a variety of resources for Women's Ministries. These sites were active as of September 2005. While not all are specifically geared to women, they contain material useful for Women's Ministries

www.hd.co.harris.tx.us/dv/DVresources.htm
Domestic Violence Services

www.cobaptist.org/womens%20ministry.htm
Women's Ministry – Resources and helpful websites.

www.smile-ntcumc.org
*Singles in Ministry – Sunday School Classes,
Divorce Support/Grief Support*

www.faithwebsites.com
Women's Ministries – Preschool Worship DAILY PARENTING

www.heartdisease.about.com
Heart and Mind Resources Christian Counseling

www.fbcgulf.com
websites that can strengthen your Christian walk and keep you informed

www.allaboutgod.com
Help Websites on Prayer

www.impactafghanistan.org
A Christian Woman in a Muslim Land Ministry to Muslim Women

www.crcna.org/justice/issues/hivaids/index.asp
HIV/AIDS – check out these helpful websites to learn more and to take action

<http://r.webring.com/hub?ring=12stepcoffeeshop>
12 step Support Drug Abuse recovery and links to other helpful websites

www.bonusfamilies.com
Bonus Families® is dedicated to peaceful coexistence between divorced or separated parents and their new families. Our goal? We're here to support YOU.

www.missionarycare.com
Frontline women: Negotiating crosscultural issues in ministry. Bridging the gap between Christian counseling and global missions.

www.ni-cor.com
Addiction, addictions, alcoholism, mental health – treatment centre for women dealing with anorexia Complete listing of helpful websites.



Embroidered Easter Card

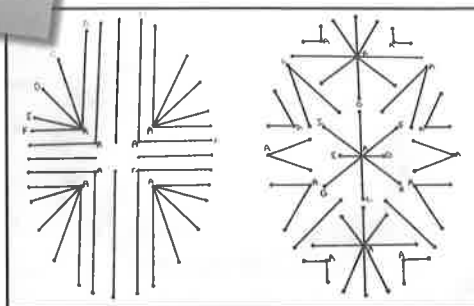
Materials

- Card Stock, Tape
- Embroidery Floss, Sewing Needles (assorted sizes)
- Glue Stick, Tea Towel

Directions

Trace or photocopy the design so it can be used as a stencil. Cut the card stock in half, and then fold in half. Place the card open on a folded tea towel. Centre the design on the front right hand side of the card, and tape in place if desired. Take a large tapestry needle and pierce through the stencil and the card stock. Pierce all the dots/ holes at once then remove the stencil. Using a smaller sewing needle, thread with embroidery floss. Bring the needle and thread up through the back of the card, starting with

hole. Secure the end of the floss with a piece of tape. Continue to sew the card following the pattern, taping the ends down as you go. When the sewing is complete cut a piece of card stock to fit the backside of the front half to cover the tape. Use a glue stick to secure.



Full instructions can be obtained through Women's Ministries, THQ Canada and Bermuda.



Outdoor Candles

Materials

- Mason jar
- Sand
- Tea Light
- Wood Embellishment (or decoration of choice)
- Craft Paint
- Paint Brushes
- Ribbon or Raffia
- Sand
- Hot Glue Gun and Glue

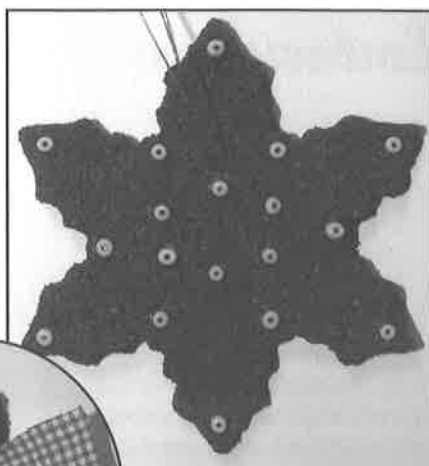
Directions

Paint the wood embellishment to your liking. Secure to the side of the Mason jar with hot glue. Tie the ribbon or raffia in a bow under the lip of the jar. Pour approximately three inches of sand into the Mason jar. Place the tea light on top of the sand. These candle holders look especially nice in a grouping on outside patio furniture, or lined along a garden pathway.

Spicy Ornaments

Materials

- 6 Tbsp. Applesauce
- 9 Tbsp. Ground Cinnamon (plus extra for rolling dough)
- 1 tsp. Ground Cloves
- Rolling Pin
- Wax Paper (to roll dough out on)
- Small Cookie Cutters
- Skewer
- Cookie Sheet
- Decorations (optional)
 - Glue, Raffia, Ribbon, Seed Beads, Dried Flowers etc.



Cut various shapes out with the cookie cutters.

With a skewer draw any details and make a hole to thread a ribbon or string through. Place shapes on a cookie sheet.

Preheat oven to 120F and place cut-outs in the oven for 1 ½ hours. Decorate with beads or as desired. String ribbon through to hang.

Directions

Combine applesauce, cinnamon and cloves. Mix with your hands until the mixture has a claylike consistency. Sprinkle cinnamon onto wax paper and rolling pin. Roll dough out to about 1/8 inches thick.

Mosaic Sun Catcher

Materials

- Wooden Frame
- Coloured Stones or Beads (transparent if possible)
- Screw Eyes
- String or Wire
- Hot Glue Sticks and Glue Gun
- Paint (optional)

Directions

Dismantle frame. Clean glass. Decorate frame if desired. Hot glue gun stones to the glass in a pattern. Put the glass back in the frame, leave the backing off. Screw the screw eyes into the top of the frame. Use the string or wire to hang the sun catcher.



Tea Biscuits

Recipe from Joan Stratton submitted by Margaret Hiscock



Ingredients:

- 2 cups flour
- 1 tbsp. sugar
- 4 tsp. baking powder
- 1 beaten egg
- 2/3 cup milk
- 1/2 cup shortening

Directions:

Sift dry ingredients together and cut in shortening until it resembles coarse meal. Beat egg and combine with milk, continue beating until foamy. Add to flour mixture. Stir until dough follows fork. Turn onto lightly floured surface or wax paper. Knead gently with the heel of the hand for 20 strokes. Roll out 3/4 inch thick and cut in small rounds with floured cutter. Place on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 450 degrees for 10-14 minutes. Should make 16-24 biscuits. Add 1/2 to 3/4 cup of raisins, if desired.

Newbury's Antipasto

Submitted by June Newbury (Excellent Fundraiser)

Ingredients:

- 2 cans finely chopped green beans
- 2 cans finely chopped yellow beans
- 2 cans finely chopped black olives
- 2 cans finely chopped mushrooms
- 1 quart finely chopped dill pickle
- 2 large finely chopped onions
- 1 large finely chopped red pepper
- 1 large finely chopped green pepper
- 2 finely chopped medium sized cauliflower

- 4 cans flaked tuna, drained
- 7 cups ketchup
- 2 cups vinegar

Directions:

Place all ingredients in large pot and mix well. Heat just to a boiling over medium heat. Seal in hot sterilized jars. Makes about 24-26 small jars. Serve chilled with crackers.



Bran Muffins

From Jean Williams' kitchen. (Taken from Kellogg's all bran box ... years ago!)

Ingredients:

- 1 cup bran buds
- 1 cup boiling water
- 2 1/2 cups all purpose flour
- 2 1/2 tsps baking soda
- 1/2 cup shortening
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 1/2 cups buttermilk
- 2 cups Kellogg's all bran
- 1 cup raisins



together flour, soda, salt, set aside. In large bowl cream together shortening and sugar, add eggs one at a time, beating well between each addition. Add dry ingredients alternately with buttermilk, stirring only until combined. Stir in 2 cups of all bran — add cooled bran mixture — then raisins.

Cover tightly and let stand at least overnight in refrigerator before baking. Mixture will keep in refrigerator up to 3 weeks. Do not stir. When required, bake at 400 degrees about 30 minutes or until done. Yields 2 dozen muffins depending on the amount that is used in muffin tin.

Directions:

In a small bowl combine 1 cup of bran buds and boiling water. Set aside to cool. Mix

Benefits of Team Leadership Discipleship Journal 1994

It would be much easier to recruit new leaders for small group meetings if they knew they would have a team to assist them. A group of three, consisting of a leader, an assistant and a shepherd has proved to

ments. The leader could study the group to select a person to approach about sharing future leadership.

What are the benefits of this type of leadership team?

A team is more effective in keeping the group focused on its purpose.

Why is focus so important? The purpose of a Bible study is to learn together from God's Word and how it applies in everyday life, so keeping the discussion directed towards this end should always be the emphasis. The fellowship with fellow believers is important, but it is the Bible study that will bring about inside-transformation and is the more important outcome.

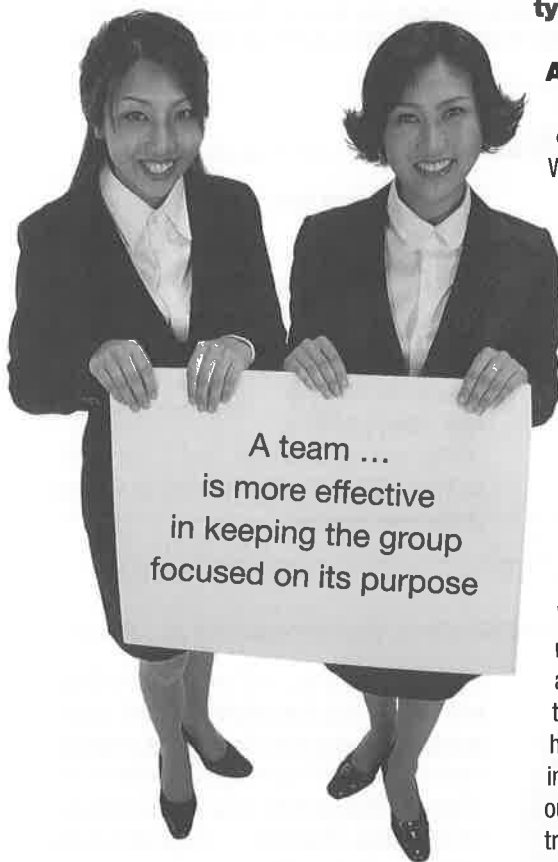
A leadership team creates a larger base for future leaders.

When team roles are clearly defined, group members might wish to identify with them and become involved. Some might not feel they could lead the Bible study but would happily lead the prayer time. Those interested in eventually leading a Bible study could start out as assistants, with the team giving them training and support.

A leadership team fosters accountability.

Quality training, occasional coaching, and the combined common sense and wisdom of the leadership team mean that problems are handled by the groups themselves to mutual satisfaction and benefit.

Adapted for Cedar Springs by Cath Ward, Toronto, ON



work well. The leader would be responsible for conducting the Bible study and selecting and training the assistant who would handle the group business, open the meetings and occasionally lead the study. The shepherd would lead the prayer time, oversee and organize any projects in which the group becomes engaged, and arrange the refresh-



Leading a Meeting - Before, During & After

Adapted for Cedar Springs by Linda Bradbury

Guidelines to help to lead women's ministry meetings more effectively and efficiently.

Schedule the Meeting

When you schedule a committee meeting, consider the topics that must be covered, and allocate the appropriate amount of time. Try to stay closely to the business on hand and allotted time frame.

Distribute Meeting Agenda

Circulate the agenda in advance, to give members sufficient time to prepare for any discussions or decisions that will occur. If members come prepared, less time will be spent answering background information questions and make more time available for discussing the important issues.

Lead the Meeting

Start your meeting on time! Begin at the scheduled time even if some members are not present.

First provide an overview of agenda items and introduce the overall objective of the meeting.

This provides direction for the meeting and reinforces what needs to be accomplished.

The Leader should steer the discussion in a way that focuses on the meeting objectives.

Items discussed that need to be addressed further should be assigned at the meeting to a particular individual or group for follow-up action. Also set a deadline and priority level for the action items.

Wrap-up

At the end of the meeting, the leader should review the action items, who is responsible, and by when.

Once the objective has been accomplished, adjourn the meeting. Even if it is thirty minutes earlier than expected!

Provide the Meeting Information

After the meeting, send minutes to all members by e-mail, photocopy or handouts. It is important to record the discussions to keep track of follow up action for all the items assigned during the meeting.

Leading –In the Beginning

When people first attend a small group Bible Study meeting it may be with a certain amount of trepidation and uncertainty as to what they might expect. It is essential that from the beginning the leader puts their minds at ease and assures them that their wishes and confidence will be respected in every way.



Be honest: There must be complete trust between leader and all those attending. The leader might begin by telling some of her own background and revealing that she also sometimes has doubts and failings. Icebreaking activities can help, but avoid requiring too much personal disclosure too soon. Humour can provide a helpful means of relating to one another, share some funny memories.

Communicate clearly: For the first few meetings, review logistics carefully (i.e. timing, format). Also confirm any ground rules or guidelines that are pertinent to the group. Reiterate before each prayer time the need for confidentiality concerning shared prayer requests.

Show acceptance: Group members may come from diverse church backgrounds and lifestyles. Some may be long-time Christians, some may be spiritual infants. Help group members focus on what they share in common, rather than the differences, — a love for Jesus and a desire to know Him more intimately. This, too, is important to verbalize often in the early weeks of the group life.

Set the pace: Within the first few weeks, the leader should try to get together with each person outside the usual meeting time. Meet for coffee, take a walk together, etc. Ask what they would like to see happen and what they are expecting from the group. Ask them what

their dreams are for their lives. Share some of your hopes and goals. Ask how you can pray for them. Give them an idea of the type of friendship they can expect as the group continues to meet.

Recruit prayers: Don't forget to pay some attention to yourself as well! Ask a few faithful, praying friends to intercede for you and your group for at least the first three or four weeks. You will need extra energy, your group will need extra encouraging, and you will all need extra prayer! It will be well worth the effort when you see your tentative, timid new group become a well-bonded, Christ-loving community.

Adapted for Cedar Springs by Cath Ward, Toronto, ON



Types of Mentors

ing or ministry. Focuses on teaching how to do something. Particularly needed by people stepping into a new responsibility or struggling with a current one.

Most of us look for an “ideal mentor” who can do the whole range of mentoring functions. We will rarely find one there just aren’t enough mentors who can do it all. But if we narrow our mentoring needs to specific areas, we will usually be able to find someone who can mentor in a particular area. Below are eight kinds of mentors who can meet specific needs in different times of life.

Intensive

Discipler: Provides guidance in the basics of following Christ, usually by helping a young Christian develop spiritual disciplines or habits. The relationship continues in this form until the believer shifts from external motivation by the discipler to internal motivation to grow and follow Christ.

Spiritual Guide: Helps a mentoree at any stage of the Christian life assess his or her own development and take initiative for change and growth. Points out strengths and weaknesses in spirituality. Provides accountability and perspective on what it means to become Christ like in all areas of life. The relationship is need-centered, and may last from a few months to several years.

Coach: Motivates and imparts skills needed to meet a task or challenge, such as parent-

Occasional

Counselor: Acts as a sounding board, offering advice regarding specific situations. Helps others see events and decisions in light of “the big picture.”

Teacher: Helps the mentoree learn about and understand a particular subject and motivates him or her to use this knowledge. Links mentoree to other resources. May be a formal or informal relationship.

Sponsor: Selects potential leaders within his or her organization and provides the encouragement, leadership skills, and resources to succeed there.

Passive

Contemporary Model: Indirectly motivates and imparts values by serving as a model for life, ministry, or profession. Demonstrates the possibility and reality of these values in a life. May not be aware of his or her role; does not necessarily have to know the mentoree personally.

Historical Model: Someone from the past who teaches dynamic principles and values for life, ministry, and/or profession. Usually “mentors” through his or her biography or autobiography.

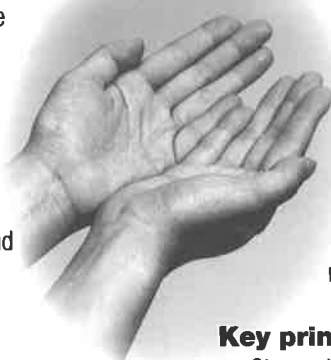
Prayer: The Foundation for Effective Women's Ministries



Most leaders dream of continuous growth and a powerful impact upon the lives of all involved. Unfortunately, not every ministry succeeds. Sometimes those that do succeed outwardly, fail to produce life changes inwardly in the participants.

If you are beginning a new women's ministry, building on an existing ministry, or initiating a new aspect of your ministry, there are questions that should be considered: What is to be the key objective? What is it that unlocks the door to God's power? On the response to this question will depend the degree of success of your ministry.

There is a growing sense that God is calling His people to pray and there appears to be a growing interest in prayer. While this is a vital need for every Christian's daily life, it must come from a deep and growing love for God.



The Key to Success in Ministry

The foundation of success in ministry, is a deepening love relationship with God. A successful ministry is a by-product of intimacy with God. The more you talk with God, study His Word, nurture a love relationship with Him, and are obedient to Him, the more God leads you.

To begin and develop women's ministries, God needs leaders who will love Him totally, because this love relationship pleases Him. He invites women to be where He is, and honors the love relationship by accomplishing His work through them.

In an activity-oriented situation, ensure that the love relationship has pre-eminence and use prayer as a confirming means to success.

Five Subtle Misconceptions

- Prayer alone insures successful ministries.
- The more I pray, the more God answers; or the more prayer, the more God will see it my way.
- God always answers prayer in the way I think best.
- Prayer changes things to my way of thinking.
- There is power in prayer to remove all my problems.

Key principles to practice:

- Step out in faith
- Put God first
- Seek His interests
- Love Holy Living
- Be willing to change for Him
- Focus on serving others first
- Practice these principles and pursue Him with passion and intensity.

When a life is characterized by love for Him and demonstrated by these qualities, prayer will add richness and depth to the ministry.



Different Women ... Different Needs

Ideas and samples for Women's Ministry Surveys

*T*here are many different ways to determine the needs of the women in your church. One of the best ways is to create a survey.

One of the focuses of this should be to establish a way in which to contact the women in your church and find out general information about their lifestyle and at what stage of life they are.

It is also useful to ask questions as to the direction of the specific ministries that the leaders are considering.

You will want to know what the needs of your women are, both personally and in ministry.

To ensure that the surveys are completed and returned, they could be filled out at an arranged activity or to offer a door prize on receipt.

A survey is an effective tool for finding women to serve in various areas of ministry and gathering general information about the age, marital status, and availability of the

women. This would be a helpful guide but it will not always pinpoint just one specific area of ministry.

The only sure way to identify the needs of the women in your church group is to get to know them. One on one conversation is the first place to begin.

Your ministry leaders can also facilitate discussion groups on focus areas. This will identify the need for different women groups in your church. Mothers of small children, single moms, single working women, working moms, empty nesters, etc ... Consider meeting with women from each of these groups to talk with them about their needs and what ministries, not necessarily programs, will meet their needs. Find out who they are, what motivates them, where they are struggling, where they have strength, how they define church, womanhood and ministry. It is advisable to limit your concentration to 5-6 from each of these groups and meet with them separately.

Prayerfully consider who to ask and trust the Lord to bring names to your mind. Let them know the purpose of the discussion and ask them well in advance of the meeting to give them time to think about what they would like to share. This is a process that will take time.

Spread it out over several months and pray for your group.

Keep notes of everything that was discussed, you will need to remember the all details. It will probably be necessary to do these focus groups again in the future for re-evaluation and it will be helpful to be able to refer back to this information.

Suggested Women's Ministry Survey

The Women's Ministry wants to ascertain the needs of all women in the church in order to meet those needs. Please take a moment to complete this survey by marking your choice and including your name and address

What do you see as your greatest need(s)?

- Spiritual
- Physical
- Emotional
- Social
- Financial
- Other



Enrichment Programs:

- Home Management
- Budgeting/Organizing
- Parenting Skills

Personal Growth:

- Self esteem
- Personal appearance
- Exercise/diet

Social Programs:

- Women's Night Out
- Special Events
- Crafts



Do you need childcare provided at Women's Ministry Events?

- Daytime events
- Evening events

Do you need transportation to attend Women's Ministry Events?

- Yes
- No

Where are you in your spiritual journey?

Do you feel far away from God?

- Would like to get to know and experience a personal relationship with God?
- My walk with God is close and personal
- I would like to help others in their walk with God

Do you feel our Women's Ministry programs and activities help women get to know each other and become connected?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

Further comments

Have you been previously involved in a Women's Ministry program?

- Yes
- No

Considering all your involvements, in what area of Women's Ministries would you be most interested?

- Attending a special event once in a while
- Weekly participation
- Helping out periodically
- Providing my expertise in an area
- Helping at a leadership level
- Assisting a team
- Teaching a Bible Study
- Heading up a specific Ministry Area

Means of Refreshment

Seven Days – Scripture, Reflection and Prayer

Women's Ministries Promotion Week designed by Margaret Hiscock

The Scripture reminds us of how we can be blessed, and also how we can be a means of blessing and refreshment to others.

Day 1 - Dependability

Proverbs 25:13 - NIV

Like the coolness of snow at harvest time is a trustworthy messenger to those who send him; he refreshes the spirit of his masters.

Proverbs 25:13 - The Message

"Reliable friends who do what they say are like cool drinks in sweltering heat – refreshing!"

What a welcome site on a hot, scorching day is a cool drink! The Scripture says that just as welcome and refreshing are the qualities of trustworthiness and reliability in our relationships – whether in our personal friendships or working relationships.

Doing what we say and following through with our commitments and responsibilities brings refreshment to others. They can depend on us.

Father, help me to be a means of refreshment to others by what I say and do.

Day 2 – Hospitality

Acts 27:3 – The Message

The next day we put into Sidon. Julius treated Paul most decently — let him get off the ship and enjoy the hospitality of his friends there.

Acts 27:3 – King James

"And the next day we touched at Sidon. And



Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself."

Paul as a prisoner for his faith, was being transported to Italy to appeal his case before the emperor.

He and some other prisoners were under the care of a centurion named Julius. When the ship docked at Sidon on route, the guard kindly allowed Paul to go ashore and visit with friends and to be refreshed by their hospitality.

I see two elements at work here which provided refreshment for the Lord's servant: the kindness of the guard and the hospitality of Paul's friends.

Father, help me to show kindness to all those who may come under my care. May my home be a place of comfort and refreshment to those who need it.

Day 3 - Resting

Exodus 23:12 – NIV

Six days do your work, but on the seventh day do not work, so that your ox and your donkey may rest and the slave born in your household and the alien as well, may be refreshed.

Exodus 31: 17 – NIV

... for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he abstained from work and rested.

God never intended that we work or keep constantly in motion. His words and example clearly teach us that we need the refreshment of Sabbath rest.

In nature we see a growing season and a resting season. The Scripture reminds us that even animals and servants (employees) need a time of rest so that they may be refreshed.



Father, forgive me for being caught up in the frenzy of activities that is so much a part of modern society. Help me to be still and know that you are God, and to be refreshed in body, mind and spirit.

Day 4 - Sharing

1 Samuel 16:23 King James

And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took a harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

God had blessed David with exceptional gifts which enabled him to write poetry and play musical instruments. He was able to use his ability to play the harp to relieve King Saul of the depression and tormenting spirits that often plagued him.

God has blessed each of us with gifts and abilities to be used in service to others.

Father, thank you for the gifts and abilities you have given me. Help me to share them in ways that honour you and bring refreshment to others.

Day 5 - Helping

2 Samuel 16:2 – NIV

The king asked Ziba, 'Why have you brought these?' Ziba answered, 'The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and fruit are for the men to eat, and the wine is to refresh those who become exhausted in the desert.'

King David's son Abasalom had conspired to take his father's throne. David and all his household had to flee for their lives. Betrayed and heavy hearted, the king headed out to escape across the desert. They were just beyond the summit of the Mount of Olives when they were met by Ziba the steward of Mephibosheth. He had a string of donkeys saddled and loaded with bread, cakes and wine to refresh those who would become exhausted on the way.

What a beautiful, thoughtful, refreshing thing to do!

Father, thank you for those who have ministered to me in kind and thoughtful ways. Show me ways I can refresh others in their time of need.



Day 6 - Fellowship

Romans 15: 31-32, NIV

Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there, so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and together with you be refreshed.

How rich is the fellowship we have as believers in Christ!

For some time Paul had been wanting to visit the believers in Rome. However, before doing that he needed first to travel to Jerusalem to deliver a contribution for the poor and to report on his ministry to the Church leaders.

He expressed two concerns for which he requested the believers in Rome to pray:

That he would be safe among the unbelievers of Judea.

That his ministry to the Gentiles would be

acceptable to the Church leaders in Jerusalem.

When this mission was successfully completed he was joyfully anticipating a time of refreshment together with them in Rome.

Father, thank you for the fellowship there is in the family of believers to support one another in prayer and to encourage each other in the faith. Help me to nurture that kind of fellowship in my church.

Day 7 - Repenting

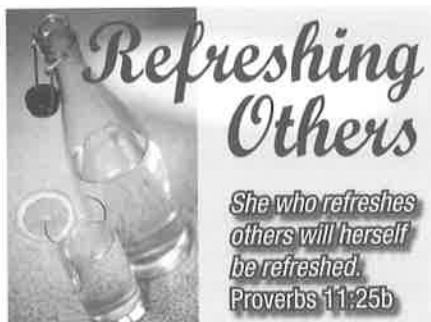
Acts 3:19

Now it's time to change your ways! Turn to God so he can wipe away your sins, pour showers of blessing to refresh you, and send you the Messiah He prepared for you, namely Jesus.

Following the healing of a crippled beggar by Peter and John, a large crowd gathered to see this most unusual sight. Peter took advantage of the opportunity to speak to them about Jesus. He linked Jesus, in whose name the miracle happened, with the God of their forefathers, and the One foretold by the prophets as the fulfilment of God's covenant with Israel. Because they had killed Jesus without fully realizing who he was, Peter invited them to repent and turn to God, so that their sins could be wiped out and so that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

There are blessings that God longs to give us as his children, but until we are willing to lay aside our own preconceived ideas and believe in Jesus and repent of our sin, we are unable to receive them. We cut ourselves off. Repentance opens the door to refreshment and blessing.

Father, please forgive me for the sin of unbelief and anything that prevents you from blessing my life.



As we begin another year of ministry to women and ministry by women, each one should consider how as individuals we can bring refreshment to the lives of those around us in the Spirit of Christ.

Here are some suggestions to help get you started:

- Write a thank you note to a favorite teacher from elementary or high school years.
- Let someone behind you at the restaurant or grocery store line go ahead of you.
- Take a couple of casseroles, some cookies or home made pie to:
 - a couple with a newborn baby
 - a family who has lost a loved one
 - an elderly couple or single who may have difficulty managing on their own
 - a single working parent
- Send a care package to a college student.
- Send a donation to a student at Booth/ Training College, War College, Ignite team.
- Give a single parent a break by offering to baby-sit her children.
- Offer to plant and weed flowers in an elderly person's yard.
- Hand out popsicles to neighbours on a hot Saturday afternoon.
- Tell your children *I love you* regularly.
- Play a game with seniors at a senior's residence.
- Write a thank-you note to your waiter or waitress and leave it with your tip.
- Take a box of good used toys to a homeless shelter that accommodates families.
- Donate games, puzzles to a local senior's centre.
- Call a long time friend who lives out of town just to say hello.
- Bring a small gift to a sick person.
- Volunteer a couple of hours regularly at a soup kitchen or breakfast program.
- Give your children's outgrown toys to a needy family.
- Invite a neighbour over for tea or coffee.
- Offer to baby-sit children at no charge.
- Call or e-mail a friend with a funny joke.
- Offer to take elderly people for doctor's appointments.
- Give a single mother a disposable camera and a gift certificate for developing the film.
- For a family new to the neighborhood, put together a welcome basket.

For more ideas that warm the heart and are sure to refresh others read the book, The Fragrance of Kindness by Cheri Fuller.



Promotion Week provides the perfect opportunity for a special event to which friends and co-workers can be invited. It should be advertised with posters, ads in local newspapers and radio stations where possible.

The special event can surround a breakfast, a luncheon or dinner, or even better, be lengthened to a full day retreat.

Here are some suggestions:

**Title: Be Refreshed ...
In Body, Mind And Spirit!**

Décor: The décor should be designed to be restful, soothing, refreshing! Perhaps an arbor effect with trees, plants, lattice work, ivy, a bench etc. would create this. Mini lights could be added to the trees if it is held in the evening. Soft music or nature sounds could be played in the background to add to the atmosphere.

Table centres: Candlelight is always appropriate for an evening event. Similarly fresh flowers are suitable anytime.

Favors could be small samples from a cosmetic company.

Names drawn could award gifts or gift certificates from local businesses, for a hairdo,

massage, facial, book, CD etc.

Registration: Arrange a table at the entrance for name tags and registration. Nearby have a covered table with punch bowl, glasses and napkins. If it is a breakfast event, perhaps a tray of fruit and cheese with jugs/glasses of fruit juice would be more appropriate.

Icebreaker: Birthday Partners: Have participants mingle in the group and identify the person whose birthday, not year, just month and day, is closest to their own. Find out two things they have in common.

Meal: The meal can be served at the beginning or end as desired.

Begin with welcomes and introductions and some indication as to what the event will include and how it will progress.

A Pause that Refreshes – can be arranged in three different streams – for body, mind and spirit so that the women move from one area to the other, or if the group is small, all together in one place in succession.

The main idea is to arrange one or more features that will bring refreshment to the ladies in those three areas. To be most effective and enjoyable, the women should be actively involved.

Suggestions to Refresh:

The body: facials, manicures, foot massages, hairdressing, presentation by local fitness club, nutritionist

The mind: Workshop on stress, journaling, scrapbooking

Teaching knitting, crocheting, tole painting, flower arranging, beading etc.

The ladies may bring some project they are working on

Table games – scrabble, crokinole, dominoes

The spirit: Provide a room or area with quiet music, a prayer wall, helpful reading, Scripture cards to take, suggested prayer topics.

Prayer wall: cover a wall well with large sheets of paper and markers for people to record prayers. If this is not possible have a prayer book, or a flip chart and easel.

Have a workshop on personal retreats from a Christian perspective, because there are personal retreats offered by all different philosophies and religions.

Have selected women share their story.

Have a Bible Study (see *A Place for Refreshing – Biblical Friendship*)

Prepare a table with samples of books and magazines that are helpful for spiritual growth and development, for women, couples, singles, parents, seniors, Perhaps the books could be signed out library fashion.

Devotions

The event may be concluded or begun with some *Devotional Thoughts* from Psalm 23.

Psalm 23 is the most loved and well-known in all of the Bible.

V 1: In his opening statement David likens his relationship with God as a shepherd to his sheep and declares that with God as his Shepherd he is completely satisfied and is in need of nothing.

V 2-3: God provides for his basic needs of food, water and rest. He is physically refreshed daily. But more than that, God provides all that is needed to revive, restore and refresh his inner life.

V 3: With God, there is guidance. God led him to where he could be refreshed, but also guided and instructed him in righteous living.

V 4: His presence overcomes fear. Many times David's life was threatened but because God was with him, he was able to overcome fear. He realized that even through death itself, God was with him.

There is comfort and protection. You are with me, David wrote. Using shepherd's language, David experienced God's protection as sheep are protected by the shepherd's rod which was used to drive away enemies, to point the way, or to nudge sheep along and keep them from straying. Jesus promised the comforting and protecting presence of his Spirit to be with his followers.

V 5-6: David likened God's treatment of him to an honored and favored guest invited to dine at the king's table, while those who hated him would see how richly God had blessed him. He treats us so royally, even though we don't deserve it. He invites us to close and intimate fellowship with Him forever.

Chorus: In His Presence, there is comfort

Prayer: Related Scripture Verses and Songs

Refreshment ... At The Well

A mid-week or Home League meeting

Décor: Include a focal point of semi-circular bricks with bucket, pail, jars etc. placed nearby, suggesting a well. Or, if available, a miniature well on a table with small containers could also serve as a focal point. A fountain with trickling water would add to the atmosphere.

Place at a convenient location a couple of ice cold jugs of water with drinking glasses and napkins on a covered table. Or a large bowl with small bottles of water surrounded with ice. The topic could very well make the ladies thirsty!

Table centres: miniature wishing wells if they are available or else a floating candle or flower.

Introduction: Wells where water has to be drawn up in a pail are not so common as they once were. They have been replaced by municipal water supplies that are chemically treated for safety and come into our homes through underground pipes, and throughout our homes by a network of pipes behind walls and ceilings. Even rural areas that may have wells, no longer need to draw water manually. It too, is piped into the homes, sometimes with the assistance of pumps or sufficient elevation.

Nevertheless, wells are still symbolic of a place of refreshment where we can quench our thirst and find water for our daily needs.



Suggested songs:

351 Life is a Journey TB 825

647 When Shall I Come TB 613

Prayer

Monologue: I Came to Draw Water

John 4: 4 – 26

Setting: *can be narrated before the woman speaks*

Jesus, along with His disciples, was traveling to the province of Galilee. To get to Galilee, He had to pass through Samaria. They had been walking all morning and about noon they came to the outskirts of the village of Sychar. The disciples went ahead into the village to buy some food while Jesus, tired from the long walk in the hot sun, sat down beside the well known as Jacob's well. Soon a woman from the village came towards the well, water pot in hand, to draw some water.



Our ancestor, Jacob gave it to us and there is no sweeter water in this whole area.

Of course, I know a person will become thirsty again after they drink the water from the well. Everybody knows that a drink of water will only last the body for so long and then we have to come and get some more to quench our thirst. But I get the impression that you are not speaking about the same kind of water that I am talking about. You say that this water you have becomes a perpetual spring within, watering us forever, even to eternal life?

Please, Sir, give me some of that water! Then I'll never be thirsty again and won't have to make this trip out here every day.

Go and get my husband? But I can't. You see, I'm not married. But I . . . I . . . how could you know that I have had five husbands and that I am now living common law, unless you are a prophet of some sort. OK ... that's it - you must be a prophet.

Excuse me, but I don't understand. Why do you ask me for a drink? I didn't think that you people of the Jewish faith would stoop to speak to me. After all I'm from Samaria, we aren't good enough for the likes of you. Or have you decided to be on speaking terms because the day is so hot and you are thirsty, but you have found yourself with no way to draw a cool drink and you think that if you are civil to me I will get it for you. You Jews are really clever when it comes to getting what you want.

Living water! What on earth are you talking about? How can you give me living water? Why you don't even have a rope or a bucket and we both know this well is extremely deep. This well has been here for hundreds of years.

Well, if you are, then tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim that it is right here on our own Mount Gerizim where our ancestors worshipped?

It certainly is refreshing to hear someone give an answer about worship that finally makes some sense! I can see the truth behind your saying that it doesn't matter where we worship, but it's how we worship that counts. I believe that God is a Spirit and we must have His help to worship as we should. And, yes, I know also that we Samaritans don't know too much about God now, but I do know that the Messiah will come ... you know the one they call Christ, and when He does, He will explain everything to us.

You are the Messiah? Did I hear you right?
Did you say that you are the Messiah?

If that's so then I must go and tell the people in the village that I met a man who has told me everything that I have done in my life and He says He is our Messiah!

Monologue by Verna Bishop, Gander NLW; Printed in The Sketch, July – December, 1978
See also 'The Sketch' July – December 1999: Something Beautiful, by Captain Susanne Fisher

To this term Jesus gave a new and special meaning.

From the time of Jesus this well has been known as Jacob's Well although the Old Testament does not mention its origin. The Genesis account does say that Jacob purchased land at the village of Shechem, which is modern Nablus, very near this Samaritan site of Sychar, now known as Askar. (Genesis 23:18 – 20, also Joshua 24:32; John 4:5)



Solo: Like the Woman at the Well I was Seeking

Devotional: Lessons at the Well

John 4: 7 – 26

The well, from which Jesus once asked a Samaritan woman for a drink, is a well fed by underground springs and is fresh and cool. Because the water is moving and not from a cistern, the ancients called it "living water."

What Jesus discussed with the Samaritan woman at this very site almost 2000 years ago, still has something of significance to say to us today.

In verses:

v. 7 – 9 Jesus disregarded gender and racial prejudice by speaking to a Samaritan woman. This shows us that the Gospel of Jesus is for everyone no matter what our race, social position, religious orientation or past sins.

v.10, 13 – 14 Jesus' offer of living water to fully satisfy our thirst refers to our spiritual thirst which only He can satisfy.

v.15 The woman was certainly interested in the kind of living water that Jesus talked about, because she thought it would make her life easier, and she wouldn't have to come to the well every day. What we learn is that Jesus did not come to take away life's challenges and pain, but to change us on the inside and to enable us to deal with our problems.

v 16 – 18 Jesus was aware of a far deeper need than this Samaritan woman herself was able to see. So he turned the conversation to her personal life, Jesus affirmed her honesty when she confessed she had no husband. However, without accusing or excusing her, he simply described her life so that she could draw some clear conclusions about the mess in which she was living. The way Jesus treated this woman encourages us to trust Him with the truth about our lives. His love and forgiveness enable us to drink deeply of the "living water" He offers.

v 21 – 23 The woman quickly changed the conversation to a discussion of where the correct place of worship was, since the Jews and Samaritans had different views. Jesus used this opportunity to remind us all that the location of worship is not nearly as important as the attitude of the worshipper.

Worship includes:

*Our praise to God for the ways
that he has revealed himself,
Our confession for the sins
he has allowed us to see,
Our thanksgiving for all
he has done for us,
And our requests to learn more.
True spiritual worship must
have God at its center.*

(Life Bible Commentary)

v 24 & 26 What Jesus teaches us about God and about Himself in these verses has perhaps the greatest significance of all. He describes God in the simplest and yet most profound terms: "God is Spirit" and it is on that level we can experience and worship Him.



However, it was his next revelation that was most astonishing and sent the Samaritan woman running to share the news. To no one else but her did Jesus so clearly and plainly tell that He — the one who sat there with her on the well — was in fact the promised Messiah.

It is what we know and believe about Jesus that makes all the difference between life and death, between just water and living water.

Refreshments: A platter of fruit pieces and wedges is refreshing anytime.

Fruit flavored yogurt mixed with dream whip makes an awesome fruit dip!



A Place For Refreshing – Biblical Friendship

This Bible Study is dedicated to my covenant friend, Captain June Newbury, whose friendship continues to bring overwhelming joy to my life. All that I understand about godly friendship, I have been privileged to experience each day through my faithful friend. My life is forever indebted to God for loving me through our friendship! – Nancy Turley

One of the greatest epidemics in our society is loneliness. God intended that people live in relationship. Everyone needs and craves friendship. We all need someone who will rejoice with us or cry with us, someone who will comfort us when we crawl through valleys of despair or laugh with us on the mountaintops of happiness. We need someone who is an ever present companion through the in and out of the daily grind, someone we can always count on. In fact, friendships can be our most valuable possessions.

What qualities do I look for in a friend?

Shortly before his death, Samuel Taylor Coleridge wrote "Youth and Age" in which he reflected over his past and the strength of his earlier years. In this work, he makes a beautiful statement:

"Friendship is a sheltering tree..."

When the searing rays of adversity's sun burn their way into our day, there's nothing quite like a sheltering tree ... A true friend ... to give us relief in its cool shade. Beneath the branches of such a sheltering tree many discouraged souls have rested

Isaiah 32:2

**Under whose branches have I rested?
Who has rested under mine?**

Scripture has many examples of friendships: (READ EACH OF THESE STORIES)

1. Elijah was ready to quit ... depressed and threatened. He told God he was ready to quit. But God would not allow this to happen.

Instead He gave him rest, good food and a tree named Elisha who “ministered to him”. **1 Kings 19:19-21**

2. Paul had a similar experience and the trees in his life significantly sustained him. Barnabas stood by him when everyone else ran. **Acts 9:26-27; 11:25-26**
3. Jesus loved Lazarus, Martha and Mary **John 11:5, John 12:1-3** He was refreshed under the sheltering branches of Bethany.
4. David found himself under the sheltering tree of Jonathan. He was loyal and dependable ... No conditions or limitations on his friendship with David. **1 Samuel 20:4** When things were at their worst, Jonathan went to David and encouraged him. **1 Samuel 23:16**

Which of these friendships resonated in my own experience of friendship? Which do I long for?

David and Jonathan are perhaps one of the greatest examples of deep meaningful friendship.

What allowed Jonathan and David to experience this depth of friendship? They were both committed to the basic principles of friendship ... “he loved him as himself” **1 Samuel 18:1**. That kind of love causes people to lay down their lives for their friends. Jesus tells us that this is the ultimate sign of friendship. **John 15:13**

Emily Dickenson once wrote “*My friends are my estate*” They are an investment. They don’t “just happen”, but require commitment and effort

Proverbs 18:24 To have friends, you must be a friend

Exodus 33:11

Moses spoke face to face. They communicated.

James 2:23

Abraham was called a friend of God. He took God at His word.

John 15:15 Jesus states “I have called

you friends”. He acknowledged the friendship.

In the busyness of this world, forming deep friendships is an even greater challenge. But because of the challenges of life, we must realize the power and beauty of friendship... A deep friendship with God will always allow us to be a better friend

Godly friendship should make us better and stronger people. Our friends become a part of the fabric of who we are. **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, Proverbs 27:17**

A Friend is a companion, collaborator, confidante....

Friends like you for who you are ... **Proverbs 27:9** ... “The sweet smell of incense can make you feel good, but true friendship is better still” (CEV)

Friends look to your interests as well as their own. **Philippians 2:4**

Friends look beyond your faults **Proverbs 17:9**. If you really want to know who your friends are, just make a mistake.

“A true friend is like tooth paste, when it is put under pressure, it appears”



In the challenges of the day. **Ecclesiastes 4:9-10**

In the burdens of life. **Galatians 6:2**

In the growth of your soul. **Proverbs 27:17**

"A friend is one who knows you are who you are, understands where you've been, accepts who you've become and still gently invites you to grow"

When have I experienced a friend as a companion?

They are trustworthy with your treasures. **Matthew 7:6** They won't trample on what is important, sacred or treasured to you.

They defend you from attacks. **Ecclesiastes 4:12**

They are constant in love **Proverbs 17:17**

How have I demonstrated being "constant in love" in my friendships?

Friends are people with whom you dare to be yourself. Transparency is expected and welcomed. Your soul can be naked with them. They ask you to put nothing on, only to be what you are. You don't have to be on your guard when you are with them. They understand who you are.

If you want to be a better friend, then you need to make friendship a priority. It takes time and effort. You have to be willing to give of your self and be open about all that goes on inside of you. You have to know how to listen. **NEVER TAKE FRIENDSHIP FOR GRANTED.**

There are different types of friends. Casual

friends are the result of circumstances. Close friends are the result of choice. **Proverbs 27:19** in the Living Bible ... "A mirror reflects a man's face, but what he is really like is shown by the kind of friends he chooses."

The closer I am to a person, the greater the impact he or she will have on my life. I must therefore choose my friends carefully. The power of friendship can either build us up or break us down. Their influence is life-shaping and life-changing. **1 Corinthians 15:33**



Have there been times in my life when my choice of friends has not been wise? Are there people in my life today that inhibit my relationship with Christ?

Howard Hughes, worth 4 billion dollars stated, "... I would give it all up for one good friend".

Faithful friends are few and far between. "O, the comfort — the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words — but pouring them right out — just as they are — chaff and grain together — certain that a faithful hand will take and sift them — keep what is worth keeping — and with the breath of kindness blow the rest away" (author unknown)

We need to know how to be involved in redemptive relationships.

- Loving **Proverbs 17:17** The love of covenant friendship is constant — no matter what!
- Consistent **Proverbs 27:10** Faithfulness is the glue of every covenant friendship.
- Forgiving **Proverbs 17:9** Lasting friendship depends on forgiveness to cover over our faults.

Do I give up on friendship over little things or am I in it for the long haul?

- Confidential **Proverbs 11:3** We need a friend that we can trust with our secrets.
- Honest **Proverbs 27:5-6** Oscar Wilde "A true friend stabs you in the front".

Which of these qualities is most important to you in friendship and why?

The Commitment of Covenant Friendship

A Covenant friendship is a deeply rewarding experience because when friends focus on the Lord within a friendship, the Holy Spirit begins a work that flows into the friendship. This will always build a strong and lasting friendship which stimulates spiritual growth in one another. **Hebrews 10:24-25**

There is no greater joy than experiencing spiritual depth in friendship. **1 John 1:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:8**. Godly friendships are born in the heart of God. They long to see God at work in each other's lives and through each other's lives.

Prayer

Intimate friends pray with and for one another.

Paul often prayed with great longing for the well-being of his friends **Colossians 1:9-12**

Job 16:20-21 remind us that there is a direct link between friendship and intercessory prayer. When you genuinely love your friend, you desire God's fullness in them. Prayer catapults friendship into the deepest and highest that God has to offer.

When was the last time I prayed with my friend? For my friend?

Accountability

A close Christian friend has the right and responsibility to hold us accountable for our actions. However, a friendship must develop stability and depth before either friend achieves the right to move into the life of another. Accountability requires a commitment to the friendship. This must be the place where we are able to be authentic and honest about our sin. **James 5:16**

A Forever Friend

Jonathan and David became covenant friends. **1 Samuel 18** They were committed to each other for all their lives and promised unfailing love. **1 Samuel 20:41-42**. Their vow of friendship impacted their lives forever. Deep life-long friendship has the power to transform and change us. Our friendships in Christ are part of God's plan to fulfill His purpose in us. These friendships draw us closer to Christ because we experience His touch upon our lives through our covenant friends ... and we are never the same.

There is a friend that is closer than a brother. That friend is Jesus Christ. We must realize that the depth and meaning of our earthly friendships are directly related to the depth of our relationship with God. The Lord offers His friendship to us ... a friendship that will never fail. **Proverbs 18:24b**

Sermon: Come Thirsty

Linda Bradbury

St. John's Gospel 7: 37-39

Introduction

Family vacations are usually great times of fun and enjoyment. Sometimes the long car ride could turn out to be a pain. The most popular question asked from the back seat was, "are we there yet"? On one occasion we were in Western Canada. On a whim we decided to cut along the south shore of Lake Superior and pick up the highroad through the lush prairie grasslands of South Dakota. We no sooner hit the highroad when it was flooded – every 10 miles or so – with plain wooden signs, advertising a place called WALL DRUG. The kids in the backseat soon forgot how boring it was and were completely taken with the many rugged hand made one-line posters; *Come in for free ice water, Quench Your Thirst at Wall. Get a Soda, Get a Root Beer. The next exit you'll be there!* By this time everyone's curiosity was heightened. We couldn't stand it any longer and watched for the next exit to find out what this was all about. We discovered an exciting prosperous town, perched atop the eastern wall of the forbidden Badlands in North Dakota. What an unforgettable experience. Ted and Dorothy Hustead were the founders and owners of Wall Drug. Following his training as a Druggist in 1931, Ted and Dorothy had a vision to establish their own Drug Store. The town God laid on their hearts was Wall. Ted's father, who was very sceptical about the venture, called it a god-forsaken spot.

After extended prayer with family and friends they felt definitely led to this place. The first years were very difficult in a town of 336 poor people. There was just no business. One Sunday in the stifling heat of summer, Dorothy was taking a break and could hear in the distance all the traffic going up and down the highway, bypassing their town. She couldn't help but wonder why nobody was dropping in. Soon she got the idea that if signs were put out on the highway for FREE ICE WATER they would soon get customers in their Drug Store. The rest is history! During the tourist season, Wall has two orchestras for outdoor concerts. The Back Yard features entertainment for the whole family, complete with cowboys and coyotes. It boasts Wall Drug Mall, Western Art Gallery Café and a Dining Room. The one phrase that personifies Wall is FREE ICE WATER. To this day 5,000 glasses are given away every day during the summer.





A spectacular sight is The Wall Drug Dinosaur in the centre of the playground which grabbed the attention of our children. And by the way, in 2005 among other inexpensive things, coffee is still 5 cents a cup!

Scriptural Background

Health experts tell us we should drink at least 64 ounces of water a day, even if we're not thirsty. It is the most important nutrient in our body. Without water there is no life.

Jesus understood the necessity of water. He lived in a climate that was mostly desert and dry. Access to water was a powerful concern everyday. A national holiday was built around this life giving fluid.

Jesus knew that people there were drinking from the river of rituals. After it was over they would go back to the same old routine, they would go back to the same old frustrations, fears, faults and failures. What was wrong with the crowd in that day is what is wrong with the crowd today. They are drawing from the wrong well.

The Condition

How does God create the desire and what does it feel like? Life is one long process of satisfying these needs. Recently the newspaper carried a story of a young man by the name of Joey Mora. He was standing on the platform of an aircraft carrier patrolling the Iranian Sea. He fell overboard and it was not known for 36 hours. When it was discovered a search and rescue mission began, with little hope of finding him. His parents were notified. He was presumed dead. 72 hours later a Pakistani fisherman found him treading water in his sleep, clinging to a makeshift flotation device he made from his trousers. They pulled him in and saw that his tongue was dry and cracked and parched. Later he spoke with newspapers and he said it was God who kept him struggling to survive. They asked him what the most excruciating thing of all was. The only thought that took over his body and pounded his brain was his desperate craving for water.

Our thirst for God is like that whether we realise it or not.

Like the woman at the well in St. John 4: 4-13 we try everything to satisfy our thirst but the one true Source. She had tried everything.

Solomon in Ecclesiastes tried wild living.

The Invitation

Jesus seems to be saying; it's a thirsty world out there. Our mission is to lead them to where it comes from. We can do that through reaching out to others in friendship, worship, bible study and compassion. Again and again throughout the New Testament Jesus showed His compassion for others and the symbol of that compassion was water.

Think about the woman at the well. She came in the heat of the day because she was rejected by others. There she met Jesus, He offered her friendship that would not last for just one year but for a lifetime. A relationship with Jesus is the only thing that will satisfy our thirst and longing for God.

The Promise

In advertising, Gatorade claims to be the thirst quencher today. But the ultimate thirst quencher is Jesus Christ who is a never-ending fountain. There is a thirst and hunger in us that only God can fully satisfy.

David said in Psalm 42, "I thirst for you, the living God." Before he became a Christian Augustine the great thinker, theologian and father of the Church, sought satisfaction in many places ... pleasure, women, learning. He finally came to rest in his conviction that was also a prayer: you have made us for yourself, O God and our souls are restless until they find their rest in you.

Linda Watson, who for 20 years was a prostitute, call girl and madam. She once

earned 65,000 dollars for a six-minute advertising assignment in a sex magazine. A stunning blue-eyed blond whose life at 42 was empty and meaningless. She hated her life. The day that Diana, Princess of Wales died in a car crash in Paris Linda Watson was at a madam's house watching the news and that was where she realised how meaningless and empty her life was. That night she cried out to God. She said: if you're there and if you are real, reveal yourself to me because my life is empty and cold and it has to change. I don't want to die in a brothel. At that moment a miracle happened and God reached into the



deep recess of her soul and met her need, her thirst was quenched. For 20 years in a cage of prostitution, but not anymore. Later she pulled out a Bible that her mother had given her as a child; she read it and found out it made sense. That evening she drank deeply from God's well.

The water of today's world only satisfies for a short while. It quenches only until we need something else. There is a living water that comes from a living God that if you drink from His well you will never thirst again.

For complete text contact Women's Ministries THQ



Refresh Your Body

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? ... God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple." (1 Corinthians 3: 16 – 17)

We honor God when we take good care of our bodies. To keep them refreshed and fit we need to regularly include the following in our routine:

Exercise:

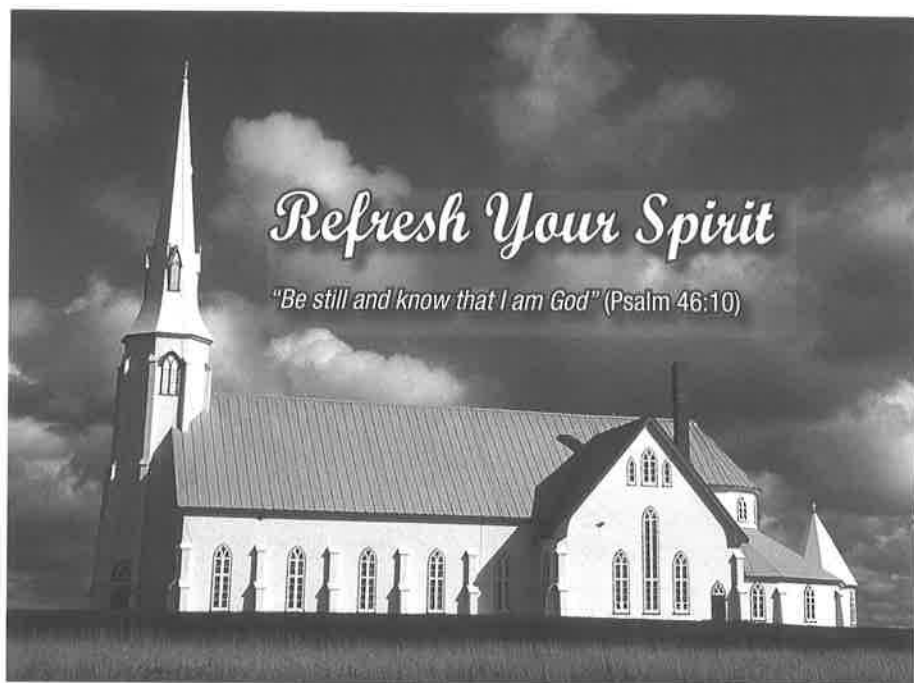
Walking, swimming, and aerobic exercises etc. improve circulation and breathing and are great stress relievers. Stretching exercises help to relieve tension in the muscles. Even when we feel we are too tired, vigorous exercise brings refreshment.

Healthy Eating:

Foods that contain vitamins, minerals and antioxidants are essential. Follow Canada's Food Guide, with emphasis on a good variety of fruit and vegetables every day. It is wise to avoid processed foods, reduce caffeine and to drink lots of water.

Relaxing Activities

Listen to soothing music, take a hot shower or long bath by candlelight. Make time for things you enjoy doing such as gardening, crafts, scrapbooking, singing, keeping in touch with friends. Set aside regular times with family or groups of friends for some recreational interactive fun activities.



We are spiritual beings, yet so often we take care of our physical, emotional and mental needs and over look that aspect of our being which is even more important. It is our spiritual self that determines our thoughts, words and actions.

God is Spirit and He created us with the capacity to know Him and communicate with Him. That is the very purpose of our existence, to have fellowship with the God who created us.

God invites us to be still in order to know Him. It is difficult for God to have our full attention when we are scurrying about and tuned in to the many sounds around us. Even when our body is still, it takes a conscious effort to still our racing thoughts in order to concentrate on God.

He wants us to know Him, and we can

only do that by spending time in His Presence, listening to Him, talking to Him, respecting Him and following His direction.

The beginning of any relationship with God begins the same way for everyone – we need to ask His forgiveness. Every one of us has offended God due to an inherited tendency to have our own way which is often in opposition to His.

Relationships thrive with good communication and a mutual caring and respect for each other. Our relationship with God is no different.

To know Him, we need to read, study, memorize His Word. We need to talk to Him. We need to fill our minds with wholesome thoughts and avoid the influences that are offensive to the holiness and purity of His nature.

Refresh Your Mind

Be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Romans 12:2

Our minds become cluttered with the noises of life all around us. They become pressured with deadlines and burdened with cares.

To refresh our minds, there are things we can do, and other things only God can do.

- We must build a regular quiet time into our lives.
- Have a frequent change of focus, from mental work to physical activity.
- Develop a more positive way of thinking. Philippians 4:8 has some good advice for this.
- Do something for someone else.

➤ Laugh — as often as possible. God gave us this gift of laughter because He knew we needed it. It is a great stress reliever and the very best of medicines.

➤ Nurture a spirit of praise and thanksgiving. Sing or speak your praise.

➤ Pray. Share with God the things that concern you. Hand them over to Him.

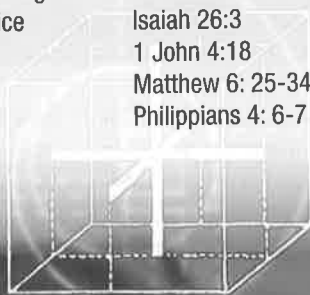
➤ Pray through these great and precious promises God has provided to refresh our minds.

Isaiah 26:3

1 John 4:18

Matthew 6: 25-34, especially verse 1

Philippians 4: 6-7



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