

'WOMEN OF THE WORD' ANNUAL REPORT, Year 2008

We continue to enjoy using this Church for the Thursday Morning Edition [ME] and Evening Edition [EE] 'Women of the Word' meetings. This is our TENTH year here, and it has been a blessing to all of us. We want to thank the Session and WPC members for your support and blessing!

In January 2008, we began our second semester continuing the theme 'Lives of Integrity, Words of Prophecy'. We completed the Beth Moore study of the book and life of Daniel and found that it related well to current events! Our key verses in Daniel 2:20-23 kept our focus on the Lord: "Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are His. He changes times and seasons; He sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. He reveals deep and hidden things; He knows what lies in darkness and light dwells with Him. I thank and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and power, You have made known to me what we asked of You." We then ended our ninth year with a study of I and II Peter.

It turned out to be a 'chocolate' semester as we planned a 'Chocolate Boutique Retreat' at the Great Lakes Leadership Campus in Elburn, IL, in March. Julie Ness and Patt Schaeffer coordinated the overnight event and about 30 women attended. Nancy Radtke taught on 'Taste and See that the Lord is Good!' [Psalm 34:8]. Then, on April 10th we had our spring outreach event, 'Chocolate Boutique Nite Out', with many different chocolate desserts and decorations in shades of pink and brown. Nancy Radtke continued her inspirational teaching with 'There is Room at the Table for YOU!'

After WOW concluded in May, a summer study started using a 13-week Nancy Leigh DeMoss study 'Seeking Him' which emphasized personal revival. It was led by Susan Hipple, Pam Gaston and Lori Stearns. An evening group used the 'Wising Up' DVD series by Beth Moore and later in the summer, Cindy Noll led an interesting study on 'What the Bible Really Says about the Land' [of Israel].

Our annual alumni summer picnic honored six new WOW babies and adoptees: Arisson Lodwig [Kris], Annalise Warren [Cory], Chloe and Kenyon Gaston [Jennifer], Timothy Fay [Esther], Anna Barresi [Marla]. Games were played, 'Jesus Loves Me' musical lambs were given and testimonies of God's faithfulness were shared. Donations in their honor were collected for 'A Child's Right' ~ water filtration systems for Chinese Orphanages.

In September we began our tenth WOW year using our founder Lois Lindley's study of the Major and Minor Prophets of the Old Testament. Along with this full year study, we have incorporated a 'Focus on the Family' video series filmed in Israel. Ray Vanderlaan teaches on 'Faith Lessons on the Prophets and Kings of Israel'. Our theme is 'Let's CELEBRATE!' and in honor of our 10th Anniversary we also ordered tote bags, pens and lanyards! Our verse is Psalm 145:7, "They will CELEBRATE Your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of Your righteousness." Registered are 68 women from 11 different towns and 34 different churches all celebrating the Lord's faithfulness! Attendance averages about 32-36 for ME and 14-16 for EE, and we had 19 women with Perfect Attendance for the first Semester! We continue with the small group format (5 ME groups and 3 EE groups), along with a time for worship and large group teaching. We have a wonderful and committed group of Leaders again this year, along with a faithful staff of Children's Program workers who teach and care for about 6 children under the age of six.

Last January we had an exciting opportunity. Five in our group were able to attend a kick off luncheon for the 'TrueWoman08' Conference and we met international/radio speaker, Nancy Leigh DeMoss. Then, October 9-11, five rooms of WOW and area women attended at the Schaumburg Renaissance Hotel which hosted the 6300 women in attendance. Over 6,000 women signed the 'True Woman Manifesto' which signified their commitment to become a part of a countercultural return to the authority of God's Word and a revival of biblical womanhood. Our WOW group as a whole has also had the opportunity to sign it. Go to the website www.truewoman.com to hear all the speakers at the conference and read and download many great resources to encourage and inspire you!

There have been many other opportunities to participate in this year: packing about 20 large packs of needed material items for 'Voice of the Martyrs' last spring; end-of-the-year leader staff Mystery Trips [Blumen Garden's for Tea and NIU Bowling and dinner]; 'Growing in Godliness' Seminar by Joyce Fisher, Batavia, founder of both WOW, Aurora, and 'Wellspring' Women's Ministry Networking group; honored about 24 area women pastors and pastor's wives with a small gift during Clergy Appreciation Month; supported member Denise Horn who organized a Community Prayer Event for our nation, economy, the election, our community, schools and each other; collected Love Offerings for the Barrett Family [whom we have been honored to hold up in prayer, meals and 'house makeover' help and thrilled now that they are all united once again with Kristin who spent 4 months in the hospital! PTL!], Dan and Aylene Fick - missionaries to Bolivia [and parents to WOW babies # 12 and 13!], Waterman Presbyterian Church Thank Offering, and in memory of our founder Lois Lindley who passed away last July [this will go toward building a Memorial Library at the African Bible College in Liberia]; partnered in prayer for member Kim Mapel who was part of a Medical Missions team along the Amazon River in Brazil; a Caroling Party with visits to the Shabbona Nursing Home, Shabbona Assisted Living, the Barrett family and ending at the Garden Apartments providing punch and cookies for a time of fellowship; a full group social to the 'Ellwood House' Holiday Open House in December; along with special Praise and Worship Celebrations [time to share how the Lord has touched our lives]; Internet Prayer Chain [now over 100 members!]; and monthly ME POW prayer meetings/luncheons.

We thank God that WOW continues to be a successful, productive program for the Lord. Many prayers are being answered and women are growing closer to God and one another. From the Prophets of the Old Testament we are learning that no matter what obstacles and oppositions we encounter, we can trust God for a new beginning. Although the days may be dark, God is there to guide us, protect us, and help us. Praise God for these needed and enduring lessons! Through the example and model of both Daniel and the prophets this year, we hope we are better able serve our families, churches and communities. Thank you for partnering with us to affect so many lives for Christ this year!