

'WOMEN OF THE WORD' ANNUAL REPORT, Year 2011

We continue to enjoy meeting at Waterman Presbyterian Church for the Thursday Morning Edition [ME] and Evening Edition [EE] 'Women of the Word' meetings. This is our THIRTEENTH 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 2011,

- We began our second semester continuing our theme 'A Woman's Heart, God's Dwelling Place'. We finished our study of the Tabernacle, and began one on Hebrews with our focus verse: Hebrews 10:22: **"...let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water"**. For our first day back, we once again converted the Sanctuary to a 'Tabernacle' and the women entered through red velvet curtains. We contemplated the 'Fabric of our Lives' and each chose a design of fabric that represented our life in some way. We also considered the different 'barriers' in our lives that keep us from both relationship with Christ as well as being in fellowship with other Christians. We each made a commitment to overcome our barriers and to enter the 'Holy of Holies' by laying our fabric squares on the altar. There definitely was a 'holy hush' felt in the sanctuary that night! We sewed a banner and a table runner from these commitment squares and it hangs in the east Fireside Room.
- We challenged ourselves to spend an hour with the Lord in prayer at least monthly with a handout sheet: '12 Ways to Spend Time with the Lord'.
- Perfect Attendance for the first semester was awarded to 14 women!

February, 2011:

- Several of us attended the 2/5 Leadership Equipping Event at First Baptist, Geneva. It was a morning devoted to building and encouraging the hearts of our leadership team through "Leadership Prayer!"
- We drew names to pair up for Prayer Sisters within our groups, and also encouraged and helped the women write their 3-4 minute faith stories. It was great to see the difference Christ has made in our lives, and it helped us follow the command in I Peter 3:15: "But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."
- 'Sit & Knit' meetings began.

March 2011,

- 10 women attended the wonderful Women's Retreat at First Baptist, Geneva, with speaker/author Angela Thomas, "Do You Know Who I am?"
- We also cut and tied 3 fleece blankets for members of WOW who are going through cancer/health issues.

April, 2011:

- We concluded our study of Hebrews on April 7th and were thrilled to hear very inspirational testimonials from two current WOW members plus our former Morning Director, Kathleen Knutson.
- 'Thank you' Wildflower Seed Packets ['Grow in Jesus'] were assembled and presented to our faithful staff members, along with Perfect Attendance awards: 11 women for second semester, and 3 for the full year!
- 4/14 was Ministry Day:
 - **Morning Edition:** sixteen women went to Lifespring Women's Shelter in Aurora and brought a full breakfast, skit, music, devotional, personal and monetary gifts, children's activity program, frozen casseroles and many items for their dorms. The Lifespring women loved it, but I think all of us were blessed even more!
 - **Evening Edition:** thirteen women met at the church to learn- and practice!- Prayer Walking. After group prayer for the Lord's leading, 6 pairs walked [plus a little driving] and covered the whole town of Waterman in prayer! In an hour, we walked and prayed the perimeter, downtown, the churches, Casey's, Kennedy subdivision, Garden Apartments, and both schools. We met back at the church to share what the Lord had done and were excited to hear how many people were personally prayed for and how much ground we covered! It was indeed a day of Kingdom work!!
- On 4/28, our end-of-the-year finale event, 'Christ in the Feast of Tabernacles', was open to any in the community. Over 45 men and women attended to hear Lyn Bond of Skokie, IL, [daughter of 'Jews for Jesus' founders] transport us to Jerusalem in Jesus' day to reveal His nature and mission. This Jewish feast shows us how consistent the God of Israel is in His desire to have a real and personal relationship with those who are looking for Him. It was a great end to our study of the wilderness Tabernacle.

May, 2011:

- We began a 7 week DVD 'summer' study called: "Jonah- Navigating a Life Interrupted" by Priscilla Shirer. Both a morning and evening group learned how even though we can't escape life's interruptions, we can change our perspective on them. Sometimes what you see as an interruption may truly be God's divine invitation to a life so much bigger than we can imagine!

June, 2011:

- The morning summer study group incorporated a time of ministry by going back to Lifespring Women's Shelter in Aurora. Twelve WOW women took many needed items, along with lunch, a skit, devotional, testimonies, door prizes and a 'day at the spa'. We had two beauticians cutting hair and others giving massages, pedicures and manicures to 15 women and children living there! It was a fun and inspiring day for all of us!

August, 2011:

- We were so sad to say good-bye [for just a little while!] to our beloved Kristin Barrett. She brightened and encouraged all our lives with her sweet spirit and focus on Jesus!

- 8/25, our annual 'Growing in Godliness' seminar featuring speaker Paula Jarot, missionary serving with New Tribes Missions in Papua New Guinea and Thailand since 1986. Paula shared her experience of adopting two Cambodian daughters, as told in her book: 'Daughters by Design: The Miracle Adoption of Two Cambodian Orphans'. Holly Bible also made an appearance with a 'neighbor'! About 50 women attended and were blessed to hear how the Lord works miracles in His time and providence!!
- Three of us on the Administrative Team attended the First Baptist Church Geneva's Leadership Equipping Training on 8/27. We learned some great tools to pass on to our WOW leaders.

September, 2011:

- Our theme this 13th year is 'Abundant Life in Christ' with the theme verse, John 10:10, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have **life**, and have it **abundantly**." Our theme song is 'In the Lord Alone'.
- Along with the Gospel of John, we are focusing on greater intimacy with the Lord through Prayer, and studying 'The Divine Intercessor' by Gary Wilkerson [son of David Wilkerson, author of 'The Cross and the Switchblade']. We've seen the Lord work when, inspired by the Spirit, one of our women wrote a poem one week and read it to our group. Then, that same day, another women wrote a song for it! We also have received videos, materials, and free newsletters from 'Intercessors for America' [IFA] to help us grow in the area of prayer for our community and country.
- We are helping our women focus on our themes through monthly cards to suction cup to their mirrors/windows which highlight key verses and quotes. Corrie ten Boom's quotes are also a focus for us this year. She and her family hid Jews during the War and were arrested. She was the only one to survive the concentration camps, and her life story and biography are an amazing testimony of the Lord's love, strength and character!
- Total members registered: ME: 50 women, 6 children; EE: 27 registered PTL! =)

October, 2011:

- We are promoted Pastor Appreciation Month in October through prayer prompts and flyers of ways to encourage the many pastors represented by our members.
- After getting the tall bookshelf moved back into the Library, our two Librarians have organized and rearranged books and DVDs. We have a weekly WOW Book table to highlight materials and books on prayer and spiritual growth from the Library each week. It's a great resource!

November, 2011:

- We coupled up for Prayer Sisters again within our groups for added contact and caring.
- We have encouraged journaling as we practice 'listening' to the Shepherd's voice [John 10].
- Four more fleece blankets were tied and prayed over as gifts of encouragement to members going through health trials/treatments.

- We celebrated Kathleen Knutson's arrival to her Heavenly Address! She had been Special Events chair for 2 years and Morning Director for 6 years. We put together a power point highlighting the many ways she touched our lives, and have her powerful testimony from last April on audio tape, available for check out.
- We feel very blessed with the support we've received from our once/semester offering. We are grateful for WPC providing a place for us to meet and made donations to the WPC Thankoffering from both WOW and individual members. We also have provided monetary help along with gifts for members and local area families experiencing needs.
- The needs of Open Hands Preschool and Samaritan's Purse/Christmas Child were also highlighted.

December, 2011:

- We saw the faith-inspiring movie, 'Faith Like Potatoes', after Morning WOW.
- The weather cooperated as we held our Annual Caroling event on Thursday, 12/15. Nineteen members, one husband and 4 children sang and handed out Christmas tracts and candy canes at Shabbona Health Care Center, Shabbona Assisted Living and individual homes in Waterman, ending up at Waterman Garden Apartments sharing cookies, punch and fellowship with the residents. It was a great evening of blessing to all!

We are so thankful that WOW continues to be a successful, productive program for the Lord. We are growing in our faith, reaching out to others, seeing many prayers answered and women are growing closer to God and one another. Our Admin Team and POW-WOW groups [Prayers of Women for Women of the Word] pray for you and the church and we covet your prayers for us!! We know that the enemy is hard after all of us who stand for Christ, so we take this assignment seriously! => Thank you for partnering with us to affect so many lives for Christ this year!

Susan Hipple
WOW Administrator

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