

A Free Will Baptist Magazine for Women

CoLaborer



July • Aug 1997

Flowers in God's Bouquet 8

A Second Taste 12

Suzanne Franks



Survey Results: You Said it

Our women want to read about what is going on in the mission field. This is just one of the conclusions that can be drawn from the survey in the March/April *CoLaborer*.

Although only about 25 women sent in the survey forms, we can tell a little about what our women like and want to read.

Who responded? Women ranging in age from their twenties to their sixties and over. Most were married, at least two were pastor's wives, and over half work outside the home.

Women in Action and *Springboard* were listed among the favorites. *Words for Women*, *Mission Alert*, and *Mission Call* ranked highest on quality.

Programs, *Springboard*, and *Women in Action* were rated most valuable more often than other categories.

Thirteen out of the 25 women want to see more helps for Christian growth. Almost as many want more human interest stories and Bible studies.

Suggested topics reflect where our women are today. For example:

- ♦ How to get our husbands to turn their hearts over to the Lord
- ♦ How to raise children and influence spouse
- ♦ How Christians should relate to a world of suffering, hate, and crime.
- ♦ Juggling time for the working woman and mother.

Most women were generous with their positive comments. "The *Wounded Lambs* series has been great." "We've just regrouped our WAC. The magazine has been so helpful to me." "I wish it came out more often."

Some women had practical observations such as the one who wrote, "We need more skits like *Lucy & Marge*. . . . We need more *Food for Thought* and more programs that relate to our everyday struggles with life . . ." Another perceptive reader observed, "Are the Bible verses just fill in? We have our own Bibles."

One woman responded with a comment and a question others may be asking. "It's great listing provision closet needs in every issue. Could you list other things—such as personal items or clothes?" Our response: The provision closet does not have space for many personal items. Besides lack of space, it would not be practical to keep personal items, especially clothes, because sizes, personal tastes, and needs vary so much.

Maybe you are wondering if you will see any drastic changes in the magazine in the next issue. Drastic? No. We do, however, want to gradually fine tune our selection of articles to suit your needs. We will endeavor to print more of what you asked for.

Although we would like to hear from more women, so far the surveys have been enlightening and helpful. To those 25 women who responded a great big thank you. Maybe you are not among these 25 and you are thinking, "I wish I had filled out that survey." It's not too late. We still want to hear from you. Let us know if you need a copy of the survey. Did I mention that you get a free gift for sending us a survey?

Mailing address: WNAC, P. O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002, e-mail: CoLaborer@nafwb.org, telephone: (615) 731-4950 extension 212 (You may leave a voice mail message with your request. Please give complete name, address, and telephone number for a free gift.)❖

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OF SUPERSTITION,
AND THE POWER
OF DARKNESS
EVERY DAY.**

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JULY PROGRAM

In your study of the Scriptures, do you see a connection between “worship” and “work”? Can we do one without the other?

If word order is important in Scripture, then Matthew 4:10 holds for us a valuable lesson: “. . . Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.” Jesus said “worship” first. In his book *Destined for the Cross*, Paul Bellheimer says, “We must receive from God before we can give to others, for we have nothing of our own with which to feed men’s hunger or quench their thirst. We are but empty vessels at the best, and we must wait to be filled before we have anything to carry to those in need . . .”

First, we **worship** the Lord. Then, we **work** for Him.

“He is the God who longs to fill our lives and our days with the wealth of His presence.” says David Needham. “. . . How do I, as a born-again child of God, respond to my Father’s self-giving? By offering myself as a gift to Him (Romans 12:1). It’s like lifting an empty cup—a cup that God continues to fill with Himself. From the overflow, I give myself to others. And in so doing, ‘God’s love is truly made complete.’” (I John 2:5).

Are “worship” and “work” interrelated? Absolutely!

We will focus on learning God’s Word first—and then learning to work for Him. The more we stay in the Scriptures and get to know God better, the deeper our love and worship become. And the more we love Him, the greater is our desire to serve Him.

Why We Need to Learn God’s Word

Have you discovered the joy that God’s Word brings to our hearts?

While he was depressed and inundated with trials, Jeremiah focused on the strength that God alone gives, “Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of Hosts” (Jeremiah 15:16). Have you discovered that God’s Word is sweeter than the sweetest honey?

Regrettably, many Christian women are starving spiritually. They do not know Christ because they do not know His Word. Knowing about God is not the same as knowing Him—and we cannot truly know God without knowing what the Bible says about Him. (Read Jeremiah 9:23–24.)

God's Character

To know God is to know His character. Knowledge of God's character and the understanding of His ways produce the wisdom of the Spirit of God. God is gracious, righteous, and merciful (Psalm 116:5). He is always the same (Hebrews 13:8). God is all-powerful (Job 42:2). He is present everywhere (Psalm 139). He is rich in mercy (Psalm 103:8). He is full of grace and truth (John 1:14). He is forgiving (Ephesians 4:32). God is absolutely perfect in knowledge (1 John 3:20). "He tells the number of the stars; He calls them all by their names" (Psalm 147:4, KJV). God calls 46 trillion stars by their names! What a God!

Love God

We learn to love God as we learn His Word. All of Scripture is stamped with "God is love." And we learn that we "love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19, KJV).

Trust God

As we study the Scriptures we learn to trust this God of the Bible. He is faithful, keeping covenant and mercy with those who love Him (Deuteronomy 7:9). As we come to know God intimately, we learn to trust Him completely. We cannot trust someone we don't know. We can, however, trust Someone who is trustworthy, Someone who always keeps His word, Someone who has never broken a promise (1 Kings 8:56).

God's Viewpoint

We learn in the Scriptures how to be like Jesus and how important it is to let Him live His life in us and through us (Galatians 2:20).

We learn how to see people and life situations from God's viewpoint.

Prepared to Work

God's Word makes us well-fitted and adequately equipped for all good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17). God's Word is profitable for teaching, for instructing us in God's way. God's Word rebukes us when we sin. It corrects us when we go astray. The Bible "stands us up again." It shows us what is right. The Scriptures train us in righteousness. God's Word equips us so we may be perfect—that is, complete and "able to meet all demands."

God's Word is not written just for our information, but mostly for our transformation. It is profitable for doctrine, yes. But God's truth must move from our head to the heart and into life.

Service

We learn in God's Word the importance of serving others. Just as our Lord came to serve, He sends us out to serve. We need to know God's directives and principles as we teach, encourage, and serve others. Do we want to share with others our opinions? Or God's? Only His powerful Word produces lasting results in the lives of those we are helping.

How Can We Learn God's Word?

Learning God's Word takes strong desire—a desire to put God's Word first in our lives. Instead of trying to find time to read and study the Scriptures, we can build our day around His Word. Following closely on the heels of desire is determination—a determination to give God's Word top priority in our lives. Then, as we discipline ourselves to study the Bible daily, we will find ourselves cherishing and enjoying the daily times of study.



INSTEAD OF TRYING TO FIND
TIME TO READ AND STUDY
THE SCRIPTURES, WE CAN BUILD OUR
DAY AROUND HIS WORD.

☐ God wants us to love His Word (Psalm 119:97, 159).

☐ God wants us to prize His Word (Psalm 119:72, 128).

☐ God wants us to study His Word (Psalm 119:7, 12; 2 Timothy 2:15). Regardless of the method of Bible study, there are three things we should always remember to do: 1. Read the passage thoughtfully; 2. Ask intelligent questions about the passage; 3. Write down your observations and conclusions, such as specific things you will do or stop doing as a result of what the passage teaches.

☐ God is pleased when we memorize the Word (Psalm 119:11). Surely most of us can memorize just one verse a week. Let's give it a try. Write or type a verse on a 3X5 card and read it 10 times every day this week. At the end of the 70 readings, chances are we've memorized the verse.

☐ God wants us to meditate on His Word (Psalm 119:15, 23). Meditation is to the soul what digestion is to the body. To meditate is to "turn over" God's Word in the mind and heart, to examine it, to compare Scripture with Scripture.

☐ God wants us to obey His Word (Psalm 119:1-8). We learn by doing. God wants us to translate His directives and principles into daily living. The flow of God's blessings is increased or decreased in direct proportion to our obedience or disobedience.

Why We Need to Learn More About God's Work

"We are on this earth to serve others," says W. H. Auden. "What on earth the others are here for, I don't know."

Why do we need to learn more about God's work? Because Jesus said "the fields are ripe for harvest" (John 4:35)—and because Jesus said, "As my Father has sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21). Jesus also commanded us to go into all the world and teach all nations to obey everything He commanded (Matthew 28:20).

Bear Other's Burdens

In God's Word we learn that He wants us to "bear one another's burdens" (Galatians 6:2). Who doesn't at some time have burdens? We all do. For one, it's a financial need. Another person is discouraged and needs to be encouraged. Someone else's body is wracked with pain. A parent is wondering why his teenager rejected the godly values that were lived out in the home.

God tells us to "help the weak" (1 Thessalonians 5:14). Paul confessed to real weaknesses (1 Corinthians 2:3; 2 Corinthians 1:8; 4:8, 9). Because we are "members of one another" (Romans 12:5), we have the privilege of strengthening one another.

Accept Others

God tells us to "receive (accept) one another" (Romans 15:7). Acceptance sets others **free** to grow. As we accept others, we are saying, "You are important to me. Your needs are important to me." We can pray, "Father, help me to understand and accept others as they are. Help me to give others the freedom to be the persons You made them to be, and may I not try to squeeze others into my mold."

When we genuinely love others, we let them be themselves. We accept them where they are, but we love them too much to leave them there. Love is patient and kind. So we patiently—with the Spirit's enabling—lead them from where we find them into a meaningful relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Our goal is "to present every man (and woman) complete in Christ" (Colossians 1:28–29).

Encourage One Another

God tells us to encourage (admonish, exhort) one another and edify (strengthen and build up) one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11). To encourage means to "put fresh heart" into someone.



ACCEPTANCE SETS OTHERS FREE TO GROW.

Just a brief phone call thanking a fellow believer for something he/she said either recently or years ago is quite refreshing. A card or note is always encouraging. A shut-in or someone in the hospital or nursing home will appreciate your singing to him or reading the Bible or a devotional book. You will encourage a distraught single mother by baby-sitting for her two or three hours one Saturday each month. You will certainly put fresh heart into the life of a widow by having her over to your home for a meal, or by taking a meal to her home. You will encourage a tired caregiver by relieving him for three or four hours this weekend.

If you know a student who is struggling financially, you could send a check to the student or to the college to be credited to his or her account. If you have something against someone, or someone has something against you, an "I'm-sorry-I-said- (or did) such-and-such" may be quite refreshing. "Let's talk about what happened and bring resolution to it today. What do you say?"

Popular Bible teacher Charles Swindoll wrote, "Every time we encourage someone, we give them a transfusion of courage." (*Growing Deep in the Christian Life*)

Everything God considers important He has included in His Word. Throughout His Word, we are given certain admonitions to get involved in the lives of other people. God wants us to think of others and how we can minister in meaningful ways to them.

How Can We Become More Involved in God's Work?

"You are called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love" (Galatians 5:13). By love serve one another.

"... The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister . . ." Matthew 20:28).

How can we become more involved in God's work?

In every facet of God's work we must be dependent upon the power of the indwelling Christ. Jesus declared, "Apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). Be totally dependent upon the Holy Spirit. It's His ministry, not ours.

📖 Take time to identify the ways God has gifted you. Are you a capable Bible teacher? Do you have communication skills? Are you good with children? Music? Showing mercy? Counseling? Drama?

📖 Be willing to do God's work for anyone in need: the discouraged, the depressed, the unlovely, the failures, the disobedient, the homeless, the weak, the strong, the proud, the penniless, the rebellious.

📖 Be aware of the risks involved in doing God's work. In 1 Thessalonians 2:9, the apostle referred to "labor and hardship." Serving others often involves hard work and personal sacrifices. Are you willing to suffer rejection or be misunderstood as you reach out to a pregnant teen?

📖 Be prepared for the demands that will be made upon you. Often our ministry to others drains us emotionally and physically. It sometimes involves spending money. Often it calls for large chunks of time. Are you willing to spend hours listening to parents of a rebellious son or daughter share their hurts? Are you willing to run errands or do yard work for an elderly person?

📖 Be deeply concerned for those outside the family of God—in your neighborhood, in your child's school, in your town or city, and around the world. Jesus commands us to be witnesses unto Him (Acts 1:8). If Christ means as much to us as we say He does, we are eager to share with others. Are you willing to share His love and His truth with your neighbors, with women in prison, with the grocery checker?

📖 Be open and honest with others. Share your real self with your neighbors. Don't be afraid to let fellow believers see inside you—see your doubts, your fears, your personal struggles. People can relate to our weaknesses. Our openness and honesty will encourage others to be open and honest with us.

📖 Be flexible. Rigid people do not experience much success in ministering to others. Don't try to pigeonhole people into your categories. Be willing to learn from others as you minister to them.

📖 Always affirm others. This is an effective way to help others grow. Learn meaningful ways to declare positively who they are. Try phone calls, notes, or cards. Do you know a single parent or a discouraged teen who could use a big dose of affirmation this week?

📖 Cultivate a spirit of humility. "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6). A spirit of humility produces a servant-heart. The person with a servant-heart is always focusing on ways she can minister to others. "A servant's job is to make life better for others," says Gayle Erwin. "A servant's job is to give freedom to others so they can be everything they were created to be. A servant's first interest is not himself but others."

📖 A heart saturated with Scripture looks at people from God's perspective. When we see others through God's eyes we see them as people of worth and significance. As Ethel Waters said, "Honey, God don't make no flops!" We feel compassion—not pity. We see a person's potential—who she can become in Christ. Salvation makes us whole, sound, complete.

📖 Cultivate the art of being a good listener (James 1:19). Let's learn to listen for feelings behind the words. Listen to people in pain—without thinking we have to give a solution to every problem. A genuinely compassionate person asks, "How are you?"—And then she takes time to listen. A caring listener hurts with those who hurt.

📖 Be a woman of prayer. Before and during and after ministering, we must focus on prayer. Until we spend time with the Father, we are not equipped to do any work for Him. "We will never know [if we are doing the Lord's work] unless we take the time to listen to His voice and be certain we are following His promptings and not ambitious ones that start in self," says Judith Lechman. Pray for others with the same intensity that you pray for yourself. The hardest (and most needed) work we will ever do is pray for others. Let the person know you are praying. If you've ever felt so much emotional and physical pain that you didn't feel like praying, you know how good it feels to hear someone say, "I'm praying for you."

Often, those who say they care about others are so caught up in their own calendars and personal concerns that even if the Lord Himself were in need, they would say, "I'm sorry, I can't fit You into my schedule." Let's not be guilty of putting our plans over another's pain. Instead, let's learn to take the other person's pain into our hearts.

Conclusion

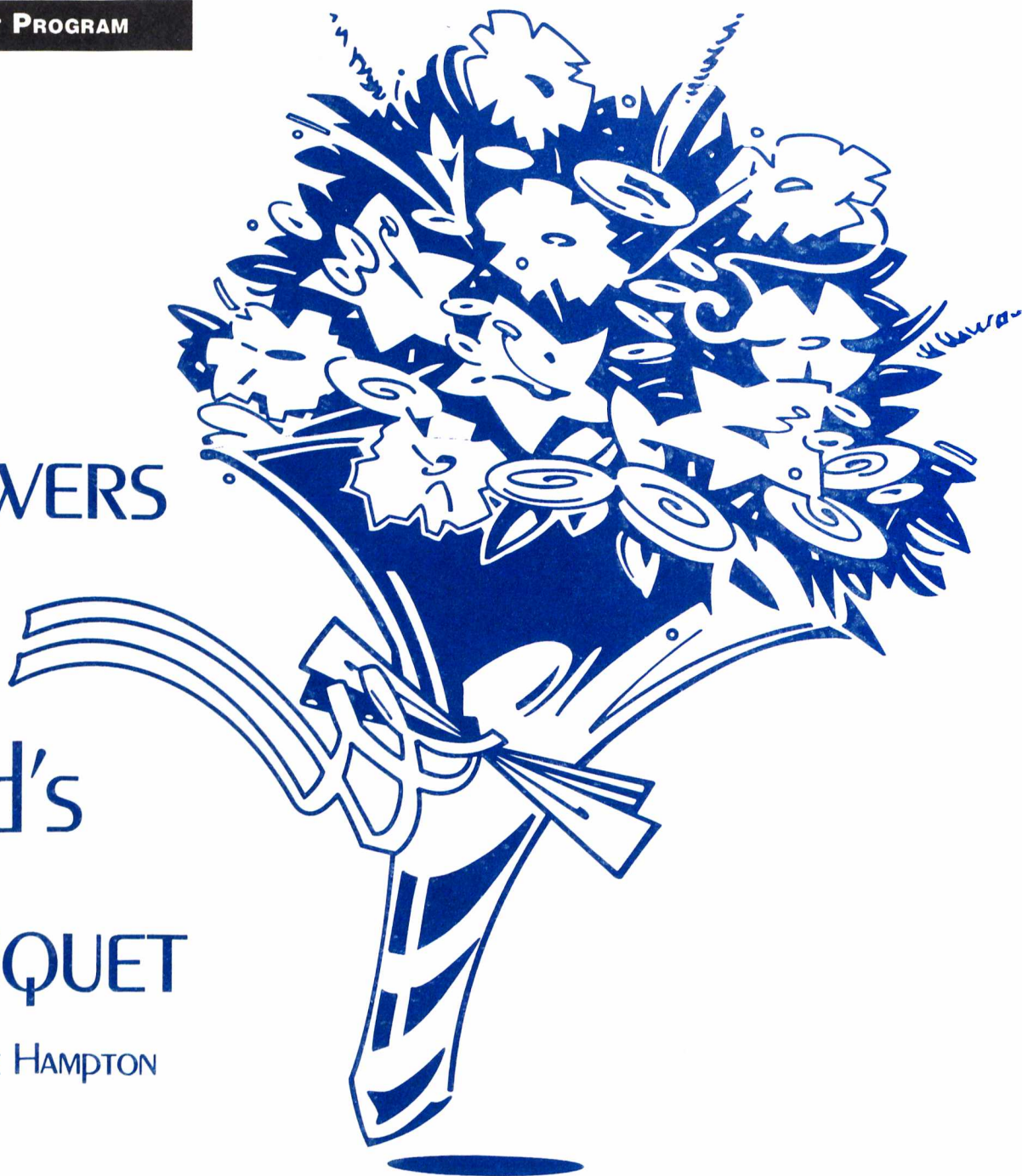
Serving others requires sacrificing my most precious commodity—time. But let's remember that each

interruption has a divine purpose. God wants us to be available to Him when someone has a need. No, we can't meet everyone's needs, but we can be so sensitive to the Spirit's promptings and so compassionate toward those in need that every day we can touch someone's life with the love of the Lord. ♦

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FLOWERS IN God's BOUQUET

by YVONNE HAMPTON



INTRODUCTION

WNAC women come in all varieties. Some are barely out of high school and some are retired. We come from different locations and different backgrounds. We look different, some tall and slender, some short and plump, some blond, some brunette. Some are poor—a few are rich—most are middle-class. Some are talented in one way and some in another.

Most Free Will Baptist Women Active for Christ live in the USA, but some reside in Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Panama, Uruguay. They speak French, Spanish, Koulango, Portuguese, Lobi and of course English. (To learn about the International WNAC groups see pages 28–29.)

Our women teach school, work in the field, operate day-care centers, give piano lessons and art

lessons. They are nurses, housekeepers, bookkeepers, tour guides, school bus drivers, counselors, and preachers' wives. (To learn more about the uniqueness of the minister's wife, see *The Minister's Wife* written by Annette Aycock, pages 22-23.)

God delights in diversity. The orchids, lilies, carnations, honeysuckle, tulips, violets, pansies, daisies, dandelions, roses, and snapdragons reflect His joy in variety. He endowed every individual with different looks, personalities, talents, and gifts.

What a beautiful bouquet we make. How dull it would be if we were all alike and were all interested in the same things. Each woman helps to make up the beautiful bouquet that is WNAC. No matter who you are or what your interests are, you can fit into this beautiful arrangement.

WE ARE WOMEN WHO PRAY

Represented by the honeysuckle (Because its sweet fragrance permeates the air around it, we have chosen the honeysuckle to represent prayer.)

James 5:16 says, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Prayer is the essence of WNAC. It was conceived in prayer and WNAC's continued effectiveness is the result of praying women. Revelation 5:8 refers to our prayers as a sweet smelling savor before God. As the fragrance of the honeysuckle permeates the air in the spring, so the prayers of Godly women penetrate every area of our work.

WNAC sponsors (*Make large posters for each of the following.*)

- ✿ Pre-Easter week of prayer for foreign missions
- ✿ Pre-Thanksgiving week of prayer for home missions
- ✿ Week of prayer for state home missions
- ✿ 9:00 A.M. daily Prayer Fellowship.

We are encouraged to have personal prayer time, to have a prayer partner, and to establish family altars. Many local groups maintain a prayer chain to pray for immediate needs in the churches and communities.

At our monthly meetings we pray for one another, our church family, our missionaries, and our community.

Jeremiah 33:3 says, "Call unto me and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not." We believe that to be successful Christians we must be saturated with prayer.

(Places the honeysuckle in the bouquet.)

ROOT: AS THE FLOWER'S ROOT IS THE SOURCE OF ENERGY THAT PRODUCES THE BEAUTY AND FRAGRANCE OF THE FLOWERS, SO IS PRAYER THE ROOT THAT PRODUCES THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WNAC.

(Places the root on the board or poster.)

WE ARE WOMEN WHO STUDY

Represented by the chrysanthemum (Because the chrysanthemum has so many different varieties and colors, we have chosen it to represent study.)

"Study to show thyself approved, unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed" (2 Timothy 2:15). WNAC encourages study in different ways and on various subjects.

- ✿ We stress the importance of reading God's Word through Bible studies.
- ✿ We promote the reading of helpful Christian literature by offering study courses on missions, prayer, and Christian living.
- ✿ We encourage the women to subscribe to *Mission Grams* (Home Missions publication), *Heartbeat* (Foreign Missions publication), *The Bulletin* (Free Will Baptist Bible College publication). All these are complimentary.
- ✿ The *CoLaborer* magazine, with a subscription list of nearly 11,000, contains programs and articles that are inspirational and informative. (Subscriptions are \$6 each for bundles of five or more, \$6.75 for four or less, six issues annually.)
- ✿ Women are also encouraged to read *Contact* magazine, the official publication of the National Association of Free Will Baptists (\$12 for twelve issues) (*Show the latest issue of these magazines as you promote them.*)
- ✿ The local WNAC group operates some church libraries.

(Places the chrysanthemum in the bouquet.)

JUST AS THE
ORCHID
is of GREAT
VALUE, EACH
WNAC
WOMAN
is PRICELESS.



STEM: THE FLOWER'S STEM IS THE CHANNEL THROUGH WHICH IT RECEIVES NOURISHMENT. STUDY IS THE CHANNEL THROUGH WHICH WE RECEIVE INSTRUCTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO FULFILL OUR PLACES IN THE GREAT COMMISSION.

(Places the stem on the board or poster.)

WE ARE WOMEN INVOLVED IN MISSIONS

Represented by the Lily (Because it represents hope, we have chosen the lily to represent missions.)

Whenever we see the lily, we think of Easter and the hope of resurrection to new life. WNAC reminds us of missions and the hope we give to a lost world. Our purpose is to "provide opportunities for women to understand and fulfill the great commission through their responsibilities in the family, in the church, in the community, and around the world." Missions is far more than just giving our money to a far off mission field. WNAC gives hope to those in our communities and around the world who would otherwise have no hope in Christ.

Each woman seeks to find her place in the great commission and help others find their place. Our women are inspired to have a heart for missions. We learn about our missionaries and their fields through WNAC. Our meetings furnish women a unique opportunity to get acquainted with some of our missionaries when they meet them at conventions, retreats, and local WAC meetings.

Missionaries depend on the prayers of WNAC and also our generous financial contributions. Not only do we support them with our prayers and finances, we encourage our missionaries by corresponding with them, sending cards and gifts, and by keeping up with our MK's (missionaries' kids). The Provision Closet in Nashville provides for home and foreign missionaries household and family items. The abundance of supplies in the Closet is evidence that Free Will Baptist women love their missionaries.

Hope in Christ is the basis for missions. Sharing that hope is WNAC's mission. All of our mission projects stem from our desire to fulfill the great commission.

(Places the lily in the bouquet.)

LEAF: ONE OBJECTIVE OF THE LEAF IS TO CONVERT DEADLY CARBON MONOXIDE TO LIFE-GIVING OXYGEN. WNAC'S OBJECTIVE IS TO HELP THE LOST FIND FREEDOM FROM SIN AND DEATH AND FIND NEW LIFE IN CHRIST.

(Places leaf on the board or poster.)

WE ARE WOMEN WHO SERVE

Represented by the white rose (Because it is a symbol of service, the white rose is used to represent action.)

Not only are WNAC women concerned about spreading God's good news around the world, we are also involved in spreading God's love in our own communities. Laura Belle Barnard writes, "We can be missionaries in purse, in prayer, and in person."

We encourage our women to give themselves to others as Jesus commanded. In local groups women may serve in various roles.

☼ Serving in the local church

☼ Visiting prisons, hospital, and nursing homes

- ⊗ Helping college students and MK's
 - ⊗ Volunteering at crisis pregnancy centers, missions, women's shelters
 - ⊗ Taking food to the sick and grieving
- (List some activities your group participates in.)*

We are giving women

When we receive flowers from someone special, it brings us happiness because it's an assurance that we are loved.

WNAC brings happiness to the hearts of many. When our missionaries, children's homes, Bible Colleges, and other mission endeavors receive our financial gifts, they rejoice because they are assured of our love.

In 1996, WNAC gave almost \$310,000 to home and foreign missions and our total outside giving was just over \$339,000. In addition our women gave \$34,207 in non-cash gifts to the missionary Provision Closet in 1996.

Through the Foreign Student Scholarship, WNAC has given more than \$10,000 to students from Haiti, Mexico, Panama, Brazil, and Côte d'Ivoire to help train them to minister in their own countries.

Free Will Baptist Bible College benefits greatly from WNAC. We offer loans at a low interest rate to students at Free Will Baptist Bible College through the Memorial Student Loan Fund. Through the years we have sponsored various projects such as purchasing furniture for the women's dorm, an organ for the auditorium, funds to purchase new books for the college library. Women support all four of our colleges. *(You may want to mention specific contributions of women in your state.)*

Our women support all four of our children's homes.

WNAC women are good stewards and cheerful givers.

(Places the white rose in the bouquet.)

BLOSSOM: THE BLOSSOM IS THE FLOWER'S FINISHED PRODUCT. IT DEVELOPS WHEN ALL PARTS OF THE PLANT COME TO FULL MATURITY. OUR WOMEN BLOOM WHERE THEY ARE PLANTED. EVERY BLOSSOM ADDS BEAUTY TO THE PLANT.

ALL OUR WOMEN ARE IMPORTANT TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST. THEY MAKE WNAC AN ORGANIZATION ON THE MOVE FOR CHRIST AND FREE Will BAPTISTS.

(Places blossom on the board or poster.)

CONCLUSION

Flowers bloom at different times of the year and in various types of soils. They need different amounts of sunlight and rain. To flourish, some require more personal care than others. Hearty flowers bloom with little or no care. But they all need one thing—food and water. So it is with WNAC women. We all need to feed on God's Word. We need the refreshment of the Holy Spirit in our lives and the fellowship of other Christian women to grow and bloom when and where God has planted us.

WNAC is growing and blossoming. All women may be a part of the process. Whether you see yourself as a delicate violet, a hearty mum, or perhaps a snapdragon, we welcome you to WNAC's bouquet. Your beauty and fragrance will help spread the gospel in your church, your community, and around the world.

Rejoice with us today that God counts us a part of His beautiful bouquet.

And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, on that day when I make up my jewels (special treasure, marginal reading). —Malachi 3:17

(At the end of the program, honor the woman who has been a member of the local group the longest or who has made special contributions by pinning the orchid corsage on her. You may want to mention some of her contributions.)❖



A Second Taste

Adventure in Côte d'Ivoire

by Mary R. Wischert

Once you've been to Côte d'Ivoire, tasted the fellowship and the joy of our people who have come from the darkness to the light, you want a second taste.

I never dreamed that I would have a second chance to visit Africa so soon. Still, there I was, February 13, sitting in the Paris airport, waiting for a plane to Abidjan. Suddenly a woman sat beside me and asked, "Are you a missionary lady?" She explained that she thought I looked like a missionary who had spoken at her church in Saskatchewan, Canada. Coincidentally, the woman had been with Christian and Missionary Alliance work in Côte d'Ivoire. What makes one look like a "missionary lady?" I'm not sure.

I was on a mission. On this trip the Free Will Baptist women of Côte d'Ivoire would elect officers for their national women's organization. I would have the privilege of installing the officers and giving them the charge. I carried a small gift for each officer and the script to give to my translator. Of course Alice Smith would translate into French and then I'd have to wait



Unloading the bus

for the Lobi and Kulango translators to give the words to the women. I was excited about the prospects for the women's work in Africa.

First, I must get through customs at the airport. The only question from the checker was "What is in the blue crate?" It had clothes, candy, gum, a bread maker, nuts—all gifts for the missionary staff. When I started naming the items in answer to the question, the official just waved me on through.

Alice Smith and Verlin Anderson met me at the airport. Alice was even more excited than I about the new organization. She has had this dream for the women a long time.

At the guest house we met the rest of the Anderson family, on a brief tour to see how they reacted

to the climate and environment of the country. They were ready to return! Paul and Rhoda Creech were there waiting for the coming of their third child. Rhoda's parents, Chuck and Fleda Snow, had come to care for Joseph and Deborah while Rhoda and the new baby were in the hospital.

Guess what? McDonald's has not made it to Côte d'Ivoire. On Friday, we ate with the gang at a substitute, "The Hamburger House" in Abidjan. Then Alice and I set out on our journey toward Doropo. We stopped at Agnibilekrou and spent two nights in Alice's house. I had the privilege of seeing the almost-completed church there. Alice told me that the women going to the retreat from Agnibilekrou were trusted with the responsibility of buying a cow, peanuts, and

yams for the church dedication. These items are more economical in Doropo.

Sunday was a long day. We traveled first to Goumère to pick up Lila Nichols, then to Bondoukou. We exchanged Alice's car for Jalayn Marten's Suzuki-4D.

Surprise! The road crew has paved about 48 miles outside Bondoukou. They are working on the road all the way up to Bouna. You haven't been on a ride over rough, dusty roads until you have ridden with Jalayn over the road to Doropo. It was the dry season and work on the road increased the orange dust that covers everything. I'd like to see Côte d'Ivoire in the rainy season. They tell me everything is lush and green then. In February it is dry and brown. The smoke from planters burning off their land makes the air even more unpleasant.

We had lunch with the Morgans and Cousineaus Sunday. Then we drove to Doropo, about an hour and fifteen minutes away from Bouna. After the camp, we stopped at Bouna to see the Bible Institute buildings and greet the six students enrolled.

No hotels on the station at Doropo. They farmed us out among the missionaries. Jalayn and Lila stayed with the Paschalls, Lynette and Carol with the Wests, Alice, Deleen and I with the Eagletons.

We went to the church to register and have the evening meal with the women—rice with



Koulango translator

meat sauce. After the service, being hot and dusty, I decided on a shower. The generator was left on late for our benefit, but just as I was about to finish, the light blinked. That means the generator is going off in a few seconds. I hopped out of the tub to total darkness. I heard Dr.

Eagleton say, "Dr. Wischart, feel on the end of the cabinet there and you will find a battery operated light." Rescued! Thank the Lord for Robert West and twelve

speaker who spoke to them on their level about the problems they face in everyday living. Her topic was Christian women and pagan traditions. For most of us in the USA, it's hard to conceive of the problems these women face. We know something of the power of tradition. They face the power of tradition, the power of superstition, and the power of darkness every day. They want help with their problems and advice about living as Christians in their families and in their villages.

I wish you could hear the



Special music by a group from one of the churches

volt batteries. No darkness is blacker than the darkness of an African village without electricity.

The church was lighted with gas lamps, increasing the heat in the building. You would notice, though, that this year the poles were standing up and the wires were strung for electricity.

Missionaries said that even the generators were there, but no official had come to inspect them and put them into operation. Some day even Doropo will have electricity, a paved road and telephones.

The women had selected a

questions they ask. How do I pay tithes on sales in the market? If a husband does not fill his role and the couple agrees that the wife will help him, is it wrong? Is it all right for a Christian to take good things thrown out because the fetisher says the owner died of a curse? If pagan parents want a widow to leave the church that is helping her and go with them, should she go? Those questions show just how complicated their lives are as they attempt to live according to the gospel of Christ.

You should have been there for the election of officers. Each

office had four nominations. Imagine a group of women who had never voted on anything. Even after an explanation in French, Kulango and Lobi, women were confused. "I didn't know," said Kathy Paschall, "that an election in Africa was like a hockey game." Eventually the women voted for the candidates of their choice.

The following officers were elected.

President

Mrs. Esther
Kambou, Doropo

Vice president

Mrs. Deborah
Amiezi, Bouna

Secretary

Miss Rosalie
Adaye, Doropo

Assistant secretary

Miss Sylvie Kambou, Agnibilekrou

Treasurer

Miss Alice Smith, Agnibilekrou

Assistant treasurer

Miss Rebecca Kra, Goumere

These women want your prayers for them as they plan for and motivate other women in the Lord's service. They set their dues at what amounts to about one dollar a year. The name they selected is *Union des Femmes Baptiste Libre En Côte d'Ivoire*—UFBLECI. Jerome, pastor at Agnibilekrou, suggested the name and the acronym. Alice says that he is one of the few who can pronounce it without stuttering.

Attendance this year was the largest yet with 136 women. Most of them came on crowded buses. In fact, at one check point, the guard made a bus turn back because he thought it was too heavily loaded. Four women

walked the equivalent of 24 miles, one with a baby on her back. The next camp will convene at Agnibilekrou at the site of the new church building.

The life of the African woman is hard, but they are much like women all over the world. They want a new outfit for the camp or they save their special Christmas



Mary R. Wischart installs the national officers.

outfit to wear. They like to have a beautiful hair style and are quite creative and unique. They like to laugh and eat. Some of them even went shopping during the sessions! Sound familiar? But they were all there for the election.

This trip was a special treat for me because I had some new experiences. At Doropo I heard the death wail from the hospital early one morning. What a mournful sound. It stopped abruptly. Later Dr. Eagleton told us that the child suffering from measles was not really dead. I visited our scholarship recipient, Silas, at his school and met his wife, Francoise, and daughter, Love. I also went to the International Christian Academy (formerly Ivory Coast Academy) where our MK's attend and the Creeches are dorm parents. The Pinkertons gave me the special

treat of visiting the Basilica in Yamoussoukro. The late president had the impressive church built and it must have cost billions, but we learned only that it is "priceless."

On a second trip you know what you want at the market and you know that you want Carol Pinkerton to go with you to do the bargaining. Abidjan has a new, modern mall, but the market is more fun.

I was impressed with the group beginning a church in Abidjan. On my last Sunday, I attended their service. They had rented a place, painted, put down linoleum, installed ceiling fans and bought a keyboard. That morning 37 attended, 7 of them visitors. After the service, they planned the dedication of the church. Sandwiches. They decided to leave them to the women. Punch. The women could take care of that also. Cake. They asked Carol to make the cake. And the men? They would see to the soft drinks for the dignitaries. Sound familiar?

Just to top off a great visit, Rhoda gave birth to a baby girl, Lydia Grace, on Sunday in time for me to bring film home and get it developed for the Creech grandparents.

I didn't see a single snake on either trip.

The physical and emotional strain is heavy on our missionary staff in Côte d'Ivoire. We ought to pray often for them and for the African Christians. How wonderful that God has given us a part in bringing the light to these people who sat in darkness. ❖

A graphic of a springboard with a coiled spring and a diving board, with the word "Springboard:" written in a large, elegant script font.

Springboard:

Innovative Ideas for WNAC Officers

Coordinator

Summer is a good time to try something different. In your executive committee meetings and planning meetings, discuss the changing schedules of your group, the unique needs, and unique opportunities for service among your women. A smart planner should observe, discern, and recognize potential possibilities and pitfalls. Do not be afraid to adapt when needed and take risks to try new things. If you have not failed lately, it may be that you are not trying new things.

You should receive emphasis packets no later than mid-July. Order what you need and get the material in the right hands as soon as possible.

Assistant Coordinator (Program Chairman)

See the 1997 Yearbook and page 17 for program ideas.

Secretary/Treasurer

Delegate cards for the WNAC National Convention are printed on page 28 of the March/April issue. Help the right people get these filled out and sent in with their Convention Pre-Registration (or take them to the Convention).

If your state meeting is coming up, remind your women to pay their dues. Send dues to your district with your monthly Treasurer's report.

Missions Chairman

How about having an adopt-a-missionary program this Summer? Adopting a missionary family or individual in a family involved more than financial and prayer support. Here are a few suggestions:

- Remember birthdays, anniversaries, etc.
- Find out specific needs, especially when they come to the USA. Fulfill this need when possible.
- Send a favorite book, tape, or video.
- Keep a "save and share" file. Find out a few of your missionary's special interests. Save newspaper and magazine clippings on these topics. Clip funny or inspirational cartoons and quotes. Save everything in your file to drop in your next card or letter.

The adoption can continue indefinitely. It doesn't have to end with the summer.

Prayer Chairman

Prayer continues to be the key to the success of any ministry. Plan a time of concentrated prayer during your regularly scheduled meeting or at

Provision Closet Needs:

Queen size sheet sets

Twin size sheet sets
(especially extra-long
fitted sheets)

Bedspreads

Electric blankets

Blenders

Correlleware®

Flatware

Tupperware® except
rolling pins, tumblers,
and salt/pepper sets

*Whenever possible, leave prices
on items to help the office keep
up with inventory.*

Bible Study

You ARE Rich

Note: *Do this Bible study on your own when you are going through a time of financial stress. These verses can be reminders of what is really important.*

You have the riches of Christ.

a) "... We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His **grace**;"

—Ephesians 1:7

b) "In whom are hid all the treasures of **wisdom and knowledge**."

—Colossians 2:3 (see also Romans 11:33)

God supplies your needs.

a) "But my God shall **supply all your need** according to **His riches in glory** by Christ Jesus." —Philippians 4:19

b) "And ye are **complete** in Him, . . ." —Colossians 2:10

Your riches in Christ are not worldly.

Paul preached the **unsearchable riches of Christ** among the Gentiles.

—Ephesians 3:8

Unsearchable riches refers to Christ's mercy, grace, and love which cannot be measured with a yardstick. These riches cannot be discovered or obtained by human means but only through God's revelation. (Paraphrased from Matthew Henry's Commentary)

You have an inheritance now and for eternity.

Paul prays that we may know "the hope of His calling, . . . the riches of the glory of **His inheritance**, . . . and the exceeding greatness of His power to us ward who believe . . ." —Ephesians 1:18–19
(Quoted from the KJV)

another time. Prepare a list of missions prayer requests from the Missions Hotline, Mission Alert, *Heartbeat*, *MissionGrams* and recent missionaries' newsletters. Pray for a few requests at a time. As you take requests from those in the meeting, pause after three or four requests are mentioned and pray before going on to take more requests. Save the prayer requests from previous meetings. Read those requests in your meetings (the Secretary may help you on this one). Encourage those present to report on answers to requests given. As Prayer Chairman, make it your job to record the answers to your prayers as a group. Don't be bashful when it comes to bragging on God.

WNAC Emphasis Prayer Requests:

1. WNAC members
 2. Local Officers
 3. District Officers
 4. State Officers
 5. National Officers who are elected at the 1997 WNAC national convention
 6. State Officers in Oklahoma as they prepare for the 1998 convention.
 7. Young Women Active for Christ and Actionettes.
 8. Those developing missions oriented materials for young women.
 9. Financial Support for the WNAC national office and for a good Emphasis Offering
 10. Mary R. Wischart, Executive Secretary of WNAC
 11. WNAC Staff: Yvonne Hampton, Martha Harris, Suzanne Franks
- (Make your own list filling in names of local officers, etc.)

Service Chairman

The July Program ideas on pages 35–38 of the 1997 Yearbook have several service opportunity ideas. Talk to the person presenting the July program and look at these ahead of time. Research the opportunities in your city or town. Ask for a few minutes to present one or two of these opportunities and/or to report on something your group (or an individual in your group) is already involved in.

Remember your college students this summer. Show them they are appreciated. Plan a back-to-school shower or prepare goodie baskets for all who are returning to school in the fall. Include church members and regular attenders, if possible.

Study Chairman

Check out the book review on page 24. The mothers in your group may want to get this book.

Do you have any unsaved Jews in your neighborhood? Do you know a Jewish individual personally? Just like the rest of the world, they need to know the Messiah. Stan Telchin wrote *Abandoned: What is God's Will for the Jewish People and the Church?* (1997, Chosen Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan). A Jew who found Christ as an adult, he gives solid advice on how to reach Jews. The book provides a wealth of information on how the Jew thinks and feels about God, Christianity, and other issues. Though his book is geared toward Jewish evangelism, it contains sound principles of evangelism, some of which may be applicable to evangelism in general. This book could be used for a missions study especially if you have the opportunity to reach any of the Jewish people in your community.❖

Extra August (Emphasis) Program Ideas

In the August Program (pages 8-11), a flower represents each part of the WNAC work. Place a large vase on a table in full view of the audience. You may want to have several flowers already in the vase. Each speaker will add her flower to the bouquet. You may use artificial or real flowers.

Below is a summary of the flowers and what they symbolize.

Prayer.....Honeysuckle (sweet fragrance permeates everything)

Missions.....Lily (represents hope)

Study.....Chrysanthemum (variety of colors appeal to all)

Service.....White Rose (symbol of service)

WNAC.....Orchid (valuable flower, lavender and white, for WNAC colors).

Just as the orchid is of great value, all WNAC women are priceless. Place an orchid corsage on the table to honor the woman who has been in your group the longest or who has made special contributions.

Also use a large poster or flannel board for the speakers to place the root, stem, leaf, and blossom as they mention each. See the bottom of this page for a pattern.

Below is a good opening exercise if you plan to present the program to your local group and not before the whole congregation. The exercise will emphasize the variety among the women in your group.

Instructions: Ask the women to stand when a statement applies to them. Then ask them to be seated before you read the next statement. You may want to add your own contrasts to the list.

If you're under 5'2"

If you are under 25 years old

If you were born in the South

If you have blue eyes

If you like to participate in sports

If you work outside the home

If you have no children

If you've been saved more than 30 years

If you have a computer in your home

If you're over 5'7"

If you are over 60 years old

If you were born in the East

If you have green eyes

If you like to read

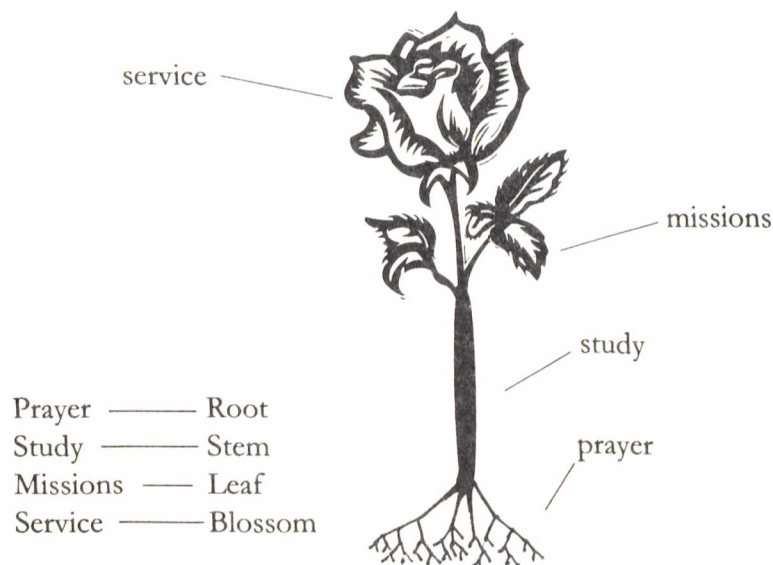
If you work at home

If you have more than four children

If you've been saved less than two years

If you don't own a typewriter or even know how to use one

Pattern for Poster to use with August Program



Lucy & Marge

Both women come in with WNAC leaflets and invitations.

Marge: I'm having fun inviting women to our emphasis program.

Lucy: I'm having fun inviting the men.

Marge: Lucy!

Lucy: Well, the emphasis program is for the whole church, isn't it?

Marge: You're right, Lucy. We do want everyone to know about the women's contributions.

Lucy: And that includes the men, doesn't it?

Marge: Of course it does, Lucy.

Lucy: Well, then, why shouldn't I have fun inviting the men?

Marge: (*Laughing*) Sure, why not. Go ahead. Just be sure to include the women you meet along the way.

Lucy: You know I will. Just teasing about the men. But you know what Mrs. Lewellen said when I invited her?

Marge: No, what did she say?

Lucy: She said that we were always asking for money. She thinks of us as just a fund raising organization.

Marge: I guess we do take a lot of offerings, don't we?

Lucy: Yes, but all our projects are worthwhile ones, and that's not all we do.

Marge: That's right, Lucy. But some women don't come to our meetings, and they may hear only about the offerings. That's why we need an emphasis program. We can let the women as well as the men know what we do as a group.

Lucy: Yeah, did you know that some women think of us as just a social group?

Marge: We do have some good times, don't we?

Lucy: Of course we do, and I'm all for fun and games. You know me, but we aren't just for fun and games.

Marge: Actually, we're a service organization, Lucy. We aim to serve our church and our community.

Lucy: And don't forget our national ministries. We can stretch all the way around the world, if we try.

Marge: Right again. Now maybe we'd better get on with our invitations.

Lucy: Right on, Marge. Our program is _____ at _____ o'clock.

Marge: We do want everyone to come.

Lucy: Say, Marge. You know that new man that started coming two weeks ago?

Marge: You mean Geoffrey Wilhelm? He doesn't have a wife.

Lucy: I know. Don't bother inviting him. I'll take care of that. I need to see if he's interesting enough for my sister, Laura. She needs a husband.

Marge: (*Laughing*) Oh, Lucy, you're hopeless.



WAC will MEET AT

early morning friend by Yvonne W. Hampton

Lord, why is my sleep being disturbed in the early hours of the morning these days?

Perhaps it's because I've allowed circumstances, daily cares, and people to crowd out my time with You. Once we talked often during the day. I included You in my plans and asked You to guide me on the path. I shared my joys and sorrows with You. You spoke to me through Your love letters.

We've been such close friends. I'm sure You laughed with me when I took myself too seriously. You cried with me in my grief or disappointment. I spent time thanking You for Your goodness and for the peace that only You can give. I even wrote letters to You and told others what a good friend You are.

In the quiet of early morning hours, You may be trying to rekindle our friendship. At that time of day, You don't have to compete for my attention. No one is calling on the phone to make plans that exclude You. No friends are telling me what's right or wrong for me. No one's shouting, "Why did you let that happen? When will you ever learn?" There's no one whispering, "I love you most and I can make you happy."

There's no work I must do this early that pulls me away from You. So I just lie here thinking of You and listening as You fill me with Your love. You don't have to wait until I'm finished with some all-consuming task so You can put Your arms around me and say, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light."

I think You're trying to tell me, "I see your tears, I know your hurts, and I care. Let me share your burdens and carry the load until you're stronger. I'll stick by you through thick and thin . . . closer than a brother." You remind me of a verse that will carry me through my waking hours.

Maybe You're trying to reach me before the daily clamor begins. You want to tell me that no matter what I do today or how far away I go, You will always be here waiting for me. Could it be that You're trying to tell me, "Don't listen to those who say it doesn't matter how you live. It matters to Me"?

You want me to know that Your grace is greater than all my sin. But it requires quiet and undisturbed thought to get those messages across. What better time than at dawn before other people, other things, claim my time and my thoughts?

In the morning stillness, if I listen closely, I can hear you say, "I love you. Remember, I gave My life to prove it. I have a plan for you. It's far better than your plans or those of others."

Things will demand my time and crowd out Your plans once the day begins. In the daylight Your plans sometime seem unthinkable. Or it may be that I'm so busy I don't have time to hear You whispering my name.

The next time I wake up early, I'll know it's You nudging me, seeking my attention before others do. I'll listen closely when You tell me that whether this day holds, joy or grief, success or failure, You will be right there beside me. You'll be listening, loving, caring for me more than any parent, brother, or friend. None is as patient as You.

Help me remember, Lord, that You're the best friend I could ever have. And help me make time for You in the middle of the day and in the evening. Help me listen to Your voice and include You in my plans. Then perhaps You won't have to remind me at 4:30 a.m. that You are **truly** my friend. ❖

COMMUNICATOR

by MARY RUTH WISEHART



Meet Barbara Chaffin

Barbara Chaffin, Ohio, became a member at large of the Executive Committee July 1995.

She is now serving as field worker for the Central Ohio District and as field worker for the state of Ohio.

"When I got 'saved,'" Barbara says, "it was just the beginning of a life of fulfillment and joy." When you meet this woman, you know that she is bubbling with the joy of Christian living.

Barbara was born in Williamson, West Virginia to Will and Lassie Hale Bryant. She graduated from Chattaroy High School in West Virginia in 1962.

Her salvation experience came in May 1960, the last night of a three-week revival. She remembers that Rev. Billy Samms was preaching that night. Her baptism in Tug River on a Sunday afternoon was a glorious experience that lingers in her memory. She testifies that since that day, Jesus has been a faithful friend. Her father died before she was born, and He has been to her a father, comforter and provider.

She and her husband, Tom, have one son, William Glen, now twenty-one years old. Barbara says he is an answer to ten years of prayer. Since Bill moved out, they are experiencing the empty nest syndrome, but they have an American Eskimo dog, Floyd, to keep them company.

As a member of Heritage Temple Free Will Baptist Church in Columbus, Ohio, Barbara is involved in the music program. She serves as pianist, sings in the choir and in various small groups. She also served as a Sunday school teacher, nursery worker and three years as church secretary.

An accomplishment she rejoices in is seeing young women she gave lessons become church pianists. Her music is a ministry and a special joy for her.

Barbara works as an administrative assistant at South Side Learning and Development Center, where she received the Employee of the Month award twice in the past year.

She serves as treasurer for the Franklin County Coalition of Child Care Providers, an organization working for affordable child care for working mothers and mothers enrolled in classes.

Barbara collects Precious Moments figurines and admits that she has been known to go shopping when an opportunity arises.

Let Your Church Know What WNAC Is Doing

August is Emphasis Month for WNAC. Women have opportunity to make a special gift to the WNAC national office expense.

Each local group may make the whole church aware of contributions WNAC makes to the work of Free Will Baptists around the world.

Include in your program the contributions your local, district, and state organizations make in their areas.

Enlistment packets are available from the WNAC office if you did not receive one in your group.

Contributors to WNAC Office for the First Quarter of 1997

The total WNAC office income for the first quarter of 1997 equaled \$47,237.92.

The following states contributed to this amount.

Alabama	\$ 300.00	
Arkansas	2,695.33	
California	176.22	
Florida	508.40	
Georgia	432.15	
Illinois	145.30	
Kansas	10.00	
Michigan	140.00	
Mississippi	786.00	
Missouri	6,154.50	(Includes \$4,120 dues)
North Carolina	425.85	
Ohio	262.74	
Oklahoma	9,438.14	(Includes \$8,750 dues)
Tennessee	1,383.39	
Texas	30.00	
Virginia	73.65	
Total	\$23,060.67	

Other income came from interest, magazine subscriptions, literature sales, and miscellaneous sources. Expenses amounted to \$60,978.76. Women gave \$79,644.74 to other causes.

If your state does not appear on the list, your state or district treasurer did not submit a report for the first quarter of 1997.

Sixteen New Groups Request Information

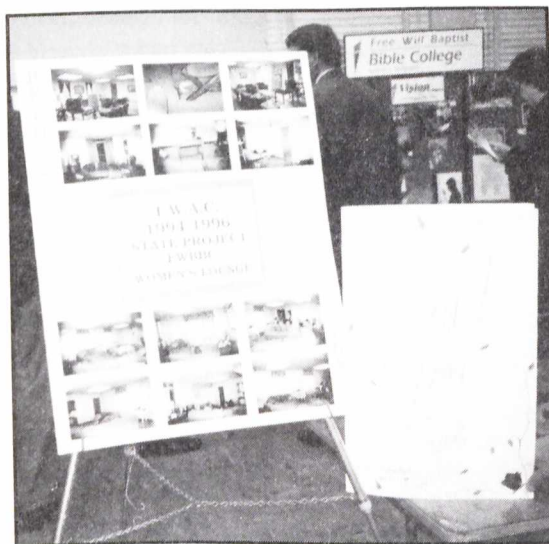
Since the beginning of 1997, the national office has received sixteen requests from new or reorganizing women's groups.

These groups were in Alabama (3), Arkansas (2), California, Delaware, Florida, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, South Carolina (2), Tennessee (2), and West Virginia.

Kits are available from the WNAC office for newly organizing groups. Kits include a *Manual*, *Yearbook*, report forms, free materials and the number of current magazines requested by the group.

If you can help organize new groups, write to the WNAC office requesting kits and giving the contact person's name and address. ❖

Women In Action



Above: TWAC State Project

The Tennessee Women Active for Christ completed a two-year project of refurbishing the Women's Lounge at Free Will Baptist Bible College. Pictures show the before and after. Walls were painted, new furniture was purchased, and new window treatments were made. Joan Presley of the Woodbine Women Active for Christ coordinated the redecorating project. The women students at Free Will Baptist Bible College thanked the Tennessee women with an oversized "thank you" card.



Below: Alabama Executive Board Meets

Plans were made for the Alabama Free Will Baptist Women Active for Christ Prayer Retreat to be held at Shocco Springs Conference Center in Talledega, September 19-20, 1997.

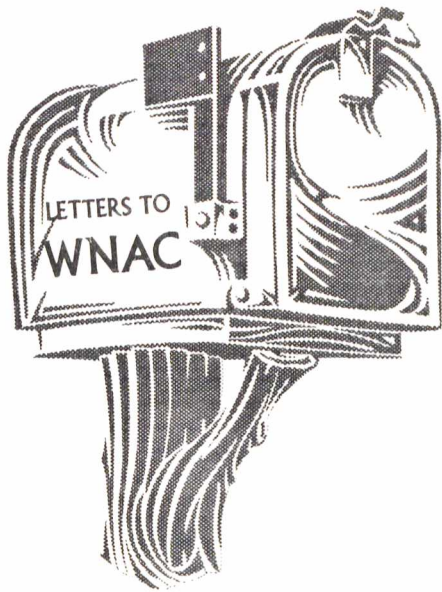
Pictured: Front Row (left to right): Elwanda Oakes (Treasurer), Jane Brazil (Secretary), Ann Kennedy (President), Carolyn Hendrix (Vice President)

Back Row: Tammy Lancaster (Mt. Moriah District President), Jackie Peters (State Line District President), Nancy Mayhall (Member-at-Large), Linda Silas (Jasper District President), Dot Reeves (Member-at-Large)



Left: Manual Study at Horton Heights FWB Church

Horton Heights (Nashville, TN) WAC President Deborah St. Lawrence taught a study course on the *Manual*. The course was divided into two sessions. The first session focused on the officer's responsibilities and was held during the officer's monthly breakfast. The second part was presented at the monthly WAC meeting. The letters on the panels were used for a question and answer game similar to Wheel of Fortune.



Our Missionaries Write

Just a note to let you know how much I appreciate WNAC and the women of our denomination. The faithful prayer and financial support is an encouragement to me. I wish I could thank each one personally. Every day I'm reminded of the open hearts and hands that provided sheets, towels, Tupperware®, and all manner of things, so that I might have an easier time on the field of Japan.

Last year we had two baptisms and on Easter this year we'll have two more. A number of seekers have come out of my English and Bible classes. Your prayers have made all this possible. Please continue to pray for the

classes, especially the seekers, and for me for wisdom as I work with them, follow up contacts, and work with the churches of Bihoro and Abashiri.

Mirial Gainer, Missionary to Japan

Thank you so much for the lovely domestic supplies that came from the provision closet. All your labors of love will one day be recompensed by our Lord. You are very kind.

Lynda Hunt and family, Missionaries to Washington



Praise God for the generosity of our Free Will Baptist women! Thank you seems insufficient for the ladies of all the local auxiliaries who support the work in Mexico and those who support the provision closet. I may not be able to thank each of you personally, but you are greatly appreciated.

I wanted to share with you what was waiting for us when we returned home. I didn't know what to think when I opened the box and pulled out what seemed to be an old apron covered with patches. Each lady of the First Free Will Baptist Woman's Auxiliary of Monett, Missouri, sewed a patch on the apron. Inside each patch was money! There was a total of \$94 raised for the mission work in Mexico. The children and I had fun opening up each patch and counting the money.

Mitzi Munsey, Missionary to Mexico

May 1, I spoke at a mother/daughter meeting for the Lafayette women. Over 50 girls and women were present. I spoke on the care of the body (we are the temple of the Holy Spirit).

Pat Franks, Missionary to Brazil

Our Readers Write

I thought the March/April issue was one of the best I've seen. It was both informative and interesting, the kind of magazine our women will keep to read over and over. Thank you for your contribution to Christ through missions and through *CoLaborer's* influence upon our FWB women!

Genevieve Waddell, Nashville, TN ❖



THE MINISTER'S Wife

Who is the pastor's wife ?

by Annette Aycock

Thousands of books have been written about all kinds of relationships—husband to wife, parent to child, employee to employer, etc. I doubt you have ever read or seen one book regarding your relationship to your pastor's wife!

Understanding who this woman is and the roll she plays as a pastor's wife will help your relationship to be a positive one. It will also help you love and pray for her more.

She is a unique individual

Psalm 139:13-14

Contrary to popular belief, God does not have a mold in which He creates all preacher's wives. All pastor's wives do not play the piano or enjoy public speaking. Some are shy and reserved, others outgoing and even boisterous!

She is a woman with her own strengths and weaknesses—likes and dislikes. She is human. She is not perfect. The pastor's wife will make mistakes, forget, procrastinate and may even yell at her kids. She is a unique individual with needs.

Spiritual needs

Ephesians 6:11-12

Your pastor's wife is a woman on her journey of serving Christ and striving to be more like Him each day. She is involved in a spiritual warfare daily—just like

you. Ironing the pastor's shirts does not give her a monopoly on spirituality! She needs spiritual nourishment through prayer and Bible study on a daily basis. The pastor's wife deeply appreciates your prayers for her.

Daily needs

Philippians 4:19

This woman has physical and emotional needs. Food, clothing, and shelter cover the basic needs. However, there is also a need for her to feel loved, accepted and appreciated. In speaking to many pastor's wives, this is one area where many pastor's wife feel hurt, rejected and lonely. A congregation holding on to the past, rejects their present pastor's wife because she doesn't measure up to the former one. A congregation may even harshly judge her behavior or judgment. This leaves her wounded and dying.

She is a wife

Genesis 2:24

After God, her next responsibility is to her husband. She is constantly working to make her marriage stronger and better. She needs to spend a great deal of quality time with this man.

One pastor habitually told his congregation "if you need a pastoral visit, drop a note in the

offering plate." One evening, after the services, he discovered a note that said "I am one of your loneliest members and heaviest contributors, may I have a visit tomorrow evening?" It was signed by his wife.

She is a mother

Proverbs 22:6

If your pastor's family has children, the next relationship that takes top priority in her life is her children. It is her awesome responsibility to lead her children to a personal relationship with Jesus and to help them grow in that relationship. Note that this responsibility to her children comes before teaching your children in Sunday school.

It can never be assumed, although some have, that because a child is a preacher's kid (PK) they will automatically come to Christ. You must let her first be a mom and ensure that your pastor's family has plenty of family time.

She is your pastor's wife

Titus 2:3-5

She is your pastor's wife. No one can say exactly what that means. The pastor has volumes of books defining his role as pastor. However, the pastor's wife's role is left undefined for each to carve her own path. As a godly woman she

will strive to be an example of Christlikeness. She will then minister to you following the example set before her.

Finally

Remember that behind every good man is a great woman. If you are blessed with a good pastor, praise God and thank your pastor's wife! This woman is a unique individual striving to please the Lord. She is the wife of the pastor. She desires to be his greatest blessing—not a hindrance. She is a mother, teaching her children in godliness. And she is your pastor's wife—ministering to you. So . . . love her, support and encourage her, appreciate her and pray for her! ❖



Ways to minister to your pastor's wife

♥ Take your pastor's wife out for lunch and get to know this individual a little better.

♥ Focus on the Family has a magazine especially for the pastor's family. Send a subscription to your pastor's wife. Address: Focus on the Family, P.O. Box 35500, Colorado Springs, CO 80935-3550

♥ Many congregations have a Pastor's Appreciation Day. Make this day a Pastor's Wife Appreciation Day this year! There is no better way to show your pastor appreciation!

♥ Send your pastor's wife and her husband on a romantic two-night get-away.

♥ Invest in the spiritual growth of the PK. Send them a good Christian biography or pay their way to church camp.

♥ Place a picture of your pastor's family in a visible location in your home as a reminder to pray for this lady, your pastor's wife.

Annette Aycock and David, her husband, have been appointed to Brazil as short-term missionaries.



Food for Thought

“Victim of abuse kills innocent children.” We gape at the horrifying news and the gruesome circumstances surrounding the lives of the “victims” in the headline story. TV ratings go through the roof when the story is told in the form of a movie. The skill of the writers, actors, and directors evoke a mixture of pity and rage from viewers. Public opinion waffles from one side to the other.

Everyone blames someone or something for the ills of society. But who's to blame? In this day of law suits, everyone seems to be putting the blame on someone else.

Who really is to blame for this world's problems? Satan? Adam? Eve? God? Parents? Abusers? School system? Government? Man's sinful heart? In light of God's basic attributes (for example, Psalm 145:9), we know God is not to be blamed. The rest of us, all of us, are guilty of something (Romans 3:23).

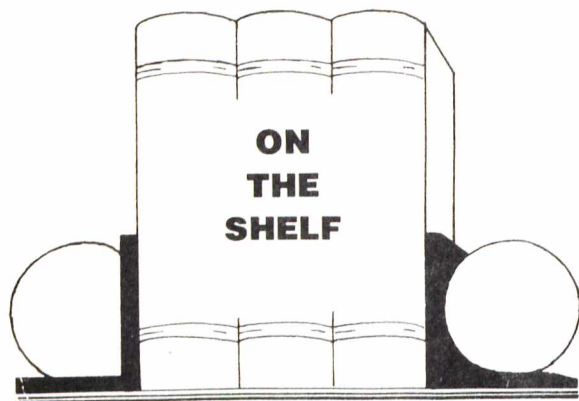
Many cry, “I'm a victim!” and they speak the truth. Without making light of such tragedies, in a sense we are all victims. To

overcome, we have to get past the blaming stage. If we hang on to our right to blame, it keeps us from dealing with our own sins.

Healing cannot start until we have God's peace that comes from knowing He has taken care of our sins. God's grace provides us with forgiveness (Ephesians 2:8-9). His grace gives power so we can have victory over sin and become who we are supposed to be (1 Corinthians 15:10).

No matter how badly we have been wronged, we all have to start at the same point. My healing only starts after I accept responsibility for my actions and repent. Then I must accept His forgiveness. To avoid Satan's blaming trap, I have to ask for God's help in forgiving those who have wronged me.

When I fall, I recognize, confess, and start over. How grateful I am for God's patience. But I cannot take God's forgiveness and grace lightly. He paid a high price so I could receive grace and victory in Jesus Christ. Alleluia! ❖



Reaching the Heart of your Teen:

Basics of Communication Between Parent and Teen

Gary & Anne Marie Ezzo
Multnomah Books, 1997 Price: \$9.99

Reviewed by Vicki Sturgill

"Parents today have little reason

to believe a beautiful relationship lies waiting to be discovered during their children's teen years. Journalist and school counselors quote statistics about drug use, sexual activity, abortions, and violence that can leave us gasping, 'Is it really that bad?'" The local news media alert parents that such problems exist in their communities. Every parent asks, "Will my child become involved in these problems? What can I do to help my child through the difficult teenage years?"

Gary and Anne Marie Ezzo wrote this book offering help to parents. They are quick to say that the parent can make a difference in his teen's life.

The Ezzos believe that relationship-building is the key to successful teen parenting. A questionnaire is given to assess parent-teen relationship which will not only indicate the strengths and weaknesses of the relationship, but also indicate practical areas for improvement. If a family regularly uses the questionnaire, its members will be reminded how to maintain better relationships with one another and those around them.

Perhaps too much emphasis is given on the role of the parents in developing the teen. Many parents may sense undue or overwhelming guilt after reading the book because of the attitudes and actions of their teens. The authors state: "Reaching the heart of your teen will take work, diligence, and patience. Most important, it will require taking a new and honest look at yourself. The cycle of change begins with parents—with their hearts and minds."

This book presents the goal of parenting as "sharing the need of Jesus Christ, to instill godly moral values and to build on this moral common ground." Parents are taught how to develop a moral maturity in their children. The principles presented serve as guidelines for parents with small children or for the parent who senses failure in training his teenager and desires to change.

Such topics as "Opening Lines of Communication" and "Maintaining Hearts" speak of how to avoid conflicts, how to encourage your teen, and how to discipline the teen which includes practical help for the parent.

In this book you will find life-changing principles to help parents more effectively communicate, encourage, discipline, understand and love their adolescent children. ❖

Life!Action.

a column for young people for everyday life

character

It's summer and you're probably out of school so please don't freak out on me when I ask you to take a short quiz. You won't get a grade on it, so just relax and answer these questions according to what you would do in each situation.

1. A store clerk gives you 50 cents too much in change. You realize it. What would you do? I would . . .

- a) give it back immediately.
- b) keep it and not give it a second thought because the amount is so small.
- c) receive it and thank God for my good luck.
- d) take it home and then return it because of feelings of guilt.
- e) keep it reasoning that the store has plenty of money and won't miss it.

2. You are in the car with some friends. Someone throws a paper cup out the window. What would you do? I would . . .

- a) ignore it because it is a small thing.
- b) not say anything because I don't like to be called a goody-two-shoes.
- c) say, "I'm sure the guy who owns this land would appreciate it if we wouldn't litter."
- d) say, "Don't you know that's against the law?"
- e) say, "Why did you do that? Don't you care about the way our city looks?"

3. You overhear some kids in your school discuss a robbery they are planning. What would you do? I would . . .

- a) assume they are joking or that it is a game.
- b) not get involved because I might get hurt.
- c) call the police.
- d) tell a parent or teacher about it.
- e) confront the people I heard talking.

4. A girl in your class tells you she called the psychic line and found out lots of interesting things that will happen in her life. She invites you to go to her house so both of you can call the number again. How do you respond? I would . . .

- a) accept the invitation out of curiosity.
- b) tell her that her call is a waste of money.
- c) quote Scripture against going to sorcerers.
- d) say, "Why do you want to call a psychic? Do you really believe they know the future?"
- e) make up an excuse that I'm busy and can't go.

Key:

1. If your answer is (a), you've probably had practice at being honest and it has become automatic. Way to go! If you chose

(d), it is better to fix something late than not to fix it at all.

Choices (b), (c), and (e) are attempts at rationalization.

2. (c) and (e) might make the person think twice the next time he wants to litter, c is more tactful.

3. (d) is probably the best choice.

4. (b) and (d) are correct, but probably (d) is the most tactful thing to say.

You may disagree with these answers. You may want to write your own answers for these questions. The point of the exercise was to get you to think about character. Questions number 1 and 2 (and maybe 4) may seem insignificant to you. But we build our character through the small and large choices we make in life.

I like what Douglas J. Rumford says about character. In his book, *Soul Shaping*, he writes, "Each choice shapes us." Each time we make a good choice, it becomes easier to make the same good choice the next time around. The same is true of bad choices. Each time we make a bad choice, it becomes easier to make the same bad choice again.

One of the definitions for character in *Webster's New World Dictionary* says that character is a pattern of behavior. The patterns we form are results of the choices we make day after day. After a while some choices become automatic—they become habits. Bad habits can be hard to get rid of.

Everyone is born with a distinct personality. Personalities vary as much as tastes differ. Character is different because it has to be taught, worked on, or built. Make good choices today, even when the decisions seem insignificant. As you grow older, you will make more and more choices. If you do what is right today, you will have a better shot at making wise choices tomorrow, even when you face the big ones. If you live at home, several decisions are already made for you. The day will come when you will have to decide for yourself whether you will get to work on time, pay your bills, and keep your promises.

The best way to prepare for the future is to take responsibility for making good decisions today. ♦

After the spring storm subsided, it left in its path several uprooted trees in our neighborhood. One of these trees was in our backyard. This particular tree was in direct view from my kitchen window. It should have been removed years earlier since most of it was dead and its limbs kept falling on the yard. But it was one of those jobs we put off with a we'll-do-it-later.

CANNAS



The storm did the work for us. Chain saws could be heard throughout the neighborhood cutting up and removing uprooted trees and broken limbs. After surveying the damage, my husband condemned the already half dead tree. He cranked up his Poulan to join the community chain saw chorus in cleaning up the debris.

After the yard was back in order, the place where the tree once stood looked almost as bad as the dead tree. I suggested to my husband that a flower bed would make the spot more attractive. He agreed and proceeded to obtain some landscaping timbers and made a good sized flower bed.

My next thought was what kind of flowers to plant in this space. I had a patch of yellow cannas behind the house next to the basement that were getting out of hand and taking over the spot where I usually put my tomato plants. So I thought I would transplant some of the cannas. They were taken from a rich moist soil and transplanted to a spot in the yard with dry, barren soil.

BY GLADYS GRAGG

About a week later, after watering and digging around the cannas, I thought, "They'll never make it in this spot." The leaves drooped and were turning brown. At first I thought, "I'll dig them up and put something different in the bed." Upon checking the cannas more closely, I noticed that the centers still showed some green. I took my trusty scissors and gave them a good shearing; cutting them back to almost nothing.

More important things occupied my mind and I forgot the canna bed for a few days. In the meantime, we had a good

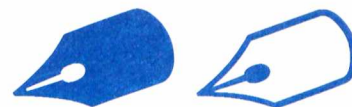
spring rain and one morning as I was washing dishes I looked out the window and saw more green in the flower bed than usual. A closer look revealed not only were the twigs of plants my scissors had spared green, but all around each plant new shoots of green were sprouting. I took more interest and started watering and weeding my flowers. In a matter of days, they were standing tall and straight and looking like cannas were supposed to look.

This morning as I looked out my window, God spoke to me through those flowers. Today they are taller than I am and full of beautiful yellow flowers. When I watered them last night, the flowers were drooped and brown from the heat, but I noticed new buds developing beside the brown ones. After a cool night and the dew, the morning brought a new bunch of beautiful yellow. This act has reoccurred all through the summer. Just when I thought, "This is the last of my cannas," I would rise the next morning to see a beautiful sea of yellow.

The Lord has used this flower bed to speak to my heart. Sometimes we are transplanted from a rich, flourishing, comfortable position in life to one of dry times and unrest. Then as we wait, God takes his pruning shears, cuts away all the dead growth, and waters us from His Word and new growth appears. Sometimes growth seems slow, but beautiful results are ahead.

God sends friends to tell us they are there for us. They don't just come one time, but over and over. Then just when we seem to be blooming again, we wilt and turn brown. A meaningful study in God's Word; a letting go of bitterness, anger, and guilt; a talk with a friend; or a good night's rest brings back the color into our lives. As I back out of my driveway this morning my cannas are there to remind me of how God can renew the joy and serenity of our lives that we thought would never return.❖

Gladys Gragg lives in Nashville, Tennessee where she works for the Free Will Baptist Foreign Missions Department. She is a member of East Nashville Free Will Baptist Church.



Poet's Corner

Thanks for Listening

Kathryn Christy, Ashland City, TN

Thank you, Lord, for listening
To all I have to say.
Thank you for Your love and mercy
Each time I kneel to pray.

Thank you, too, for all the joy
You bring into my heart.
But always when sorrow comes
You gladly bear a part.

I know I'm weak and wayward
And must often cry, forgive,
In the holy name of Jesus
Who died that I might live.

I have nothing, Lord, to offer,
It is through grace alone.
I simply trust in Jesus
To lead me safely home.

We Come, Then Go

Linda Sligh, Smithville, MS

We come
to the Lord,
just as we are,

Our all
on the altar
we lay.

He takes
full control
of our body and soul,

Then sends
us on
His way.

We come
to the Lord,
just as we are,

Then go
where He
tells us to go!❖

Free Will Baptist INTERNATIONAL FAMILY



Cedars of Lebanon, Pinar del Rio: Pictured are all the delegates to the annual Cuban WNAC meeting. National officers are seated on the ground. Guest Rachel Warner is standing on the right.

Flavia, Esther, Margarita, Sylvia, Doris, Everyl. What do these

names have in common? Each is the first name of a Free Will Baptist woman who presides over the national women's organization in her country. Six presidents. Yes, Free Will Baptist women have national organizations in six countries!

We call ourselves Women Nationally Active for Christ in the United States. The August Program describes our work in the United States and Canada. What about the rest of the world? Pull up a chair and let's snapshot Free Will Baptist women's organizations in other countries.

Brazil

Free Will Baptist women in Brazil call themselves *União Feminina Missionaria Batista Livre*. Tough to pronounce, maybe. It means "Free Will Baptist Women's Missionary Union."

Brazilian women expect 100–120 women to attend their fifth annual retreat which meets November 9–10.

Thirteen local Brazilian groups meet regularly—some organized and reporting to the national, others not yet organized. Three churches in the state of Minas Gerais recently started a new district association. Women in those churches plan to organize on local and district levels.

Brazilian Free Will Baptist women are active in various ministries. Local groups offer study courses on subjects ranging from the Role of the Wife to studies on Ephesians and Philippians. Local ministries include preparing food baskets for the poor, visitation, and prayer chains. One group helps the Free Will Baptist children's home in Brazil.

Cuba

The Cuban Free Will Baptist women meet during the Cuban National Convention, usually in February. The meeting takes place at the Free Will Baptist seminary property, Cedars of Lebanon, in Pinar del Rio.

All the churches and most missions have local chapters. Their name reflects the unique structure of the Cuban convention. They are called *Departamento De Las Damas* (the Department of the Ladies).

Representatives of the departments met on March 1 this year. Delegates from each church shared information concerning the projects they accomplished during the past year, as well as those projects proposed for 1997/98.

Linda Callaway writes, "The ladies provide food for the seminary. They have done projects in the past to buy light fixtures for the seminary dining hall and for the dormitories. They

serve as an encouragement to the ladies of their churches as well as an outreach to lost women of their communities.”

Mexico

Sociedad Nacional de Damas Auxiliares is the formal name for Mexico's Free Will Baptist women. It means “National Society of Ladies Auxiliaries.” They meet each year during the Mexican National Convention in August. Cooking during the national convention is one of the women's biggest projects. “Our conventions have drawn as many as 500 for the four-day meeting,” remarks Mitzi Munsey, “so it is quite an undertaking.” The districts take turns cooking.

Mexico's women also support the ministry of two single women who are seminary graduates. They travel to different churches holding classes for ladies and children.

Panama

Sociedad de Damas (Ladies Society) is what Panamanian women call themselves. Each church and mission (about 13) has an active group who meet weekly for prayer, and at least monthly for business and study. The women help support three national Panamanian missionaries and their families. Local groups participate in evangelistic teas, visitation, bazaars, and planning church meals.

Panama's annual women's retreat meets in March. The 1997 theme was, “Do you want wisdom? Fear the Lord!” Judy Lytle writes, “Adelaida Mendoza, the wife of one of our pastors, gave the main talks and did an excellent job! She went deep into the Word and really had us all thinking and examining our lives.” Brenda Bunch and Judy Lytle taught workshops during the retreat.

Others

For information on Côte d'Ivoire see, *A Second Taste*, Mary R. Wischart's first-person account of her visit to this West African country (page 12–14).

Beyond these six countries, Free Will Baptist missions has reached other countries. Though women in these other countries have not organized on the national level, local women's groups and individual women take active roles in the ministry.

In a letter from Spain, Lynn Midgett writes of far reaching results through evangelistic breakfasts for women. One-third of the women who attend are unsaved. “So far this year, five of those women . . . have come to know the Lord.”

Missionaries in Japan have found they can reach women through cooking and English classes. Often a woman, through one of these classes, will be the first in her family to meet Christ.

All the women who support Free Will Baptist missions around the world deserve a big thanks. WNAC was created for the purpose of spreading the gospel. Missions is the essence of WNAC.

Rejoice that thousands of people from five continents know and serve God because nameless women have supported missions through prayer and giving over the years. Pray for leaders in each country. Pray for your sisters around the world. Pray for the sister who sits next to you every Sunday. Praise God for allowing us to be part of His mighty work in our world. ❖

Compiled by Suzanne Franks with thanks to Ron and Linda Callaway, Pat Franks, Judy Lytle, and Mitzi Munsey who helped gather information on the various countries.

Pray for these Presidents

Brazil

Flavia Moura Achê
Jaboticabal, São Paulo

Côte d'Ivoire

Esther Kambou
Doropo

Cuba

Margarita Pino Perdomo
Canasi, Havana

Mexico

Sylvia Guapo
Ayotla, Mexico State

Pamana

Doris Munoz
Panama City

United States

Everyl Getz
McAllen, Texas



MISSION ALERT:

Evangelism News from Around the World

Sonapurhat, India

In February over 1500 believers met to worship, feast on the Word, and fellowship at the 1997 Annual Free Will Baptist Conference in India. Several dozen people followed the Lord in baptism during the conference. In spite of the many hardships, 386 new members were baptized in 1996.

Kurgan, Russia

Missionary Pastor Novikov of Kurgan is praising the Lord for progress in the work. About 40 people attend worship services and six people have followed the Lord in baptism. Novikov is teaching discipleship classes to the new members. Five people have completed the initial three-month course of study which teaches the basics of Christianity, and 10 others are waiting to take the course. Pray for new members to grow strong in their walk and take on responsibilities in the church.

Rivera, Uruguay

"Cold showers, wall to wall mattresses, short nights. Who would want such?" writes missionary Dave Franks Jr. "If it comes with great fellowship, a mixture of Spanish and Portuguese and an abundance of noodles and rice (How else can you feed an army on a shoestring budget?), you must be talking about camp in Uruguay." Camp attendance included 129 full-time campers and about 67 others who visited during the week. Praise God for the 12 people who made professions of faith during camp. The Dave Franks Jr. family is currently on stateside assignment and hope to return to Uruguay soon.

New Orleans (Slidell), Louisiana

The New Hope Free Will Baptist Mission has rented a small church building in a residential area. Little Sarah Folkins made her way to the altar for salvation during their first Sunday night service at the new location. Missionaries Norman and Bessie Richards write, "The city of Slidell has given us a helping hand in free advertising. This week, they placed three metal signs bearing our church name and location at strategic intersections on our street."

Paducah, Kentucky

Missionary David Carlson is praising the Lord for good services and the recent rededication (5) and salvation decisions (2). The Carlsons request prayer that they can boldly show how Christ is the answer to the needs in the lives of those who are on their prospect list.

Mesa, Arizona

The East Valley Free Will Baptist Church finally received their certificate of occupancy from the city of Mesa. They are also thankful that the church is close to becoming self-supporting.

Missionary Howard Gwartney had his first ride-along with Scott Rings, a law enforcement officer with the Mesa Police Department and church member. Gwartney received approval by the Police Department to assist in a new volunteer chaplaincy program. He hopes to be able to serve the community, to get acquainted with Mesa's law enforcement agency, and reach some for Christ. Pray for this ministry. ❖



Words for Women

*Mary Ruth
Wischart*

I fell! If you've fallen, you understand. One minute you're upright, the next you're falling and can't do anything about it. I had been to Côte d'Ivoire and back without a mishap. I was walking my block for the American Heart Association, March 1. Just strolling along minding my own business, I caught my toe on a tuft of grass and fell sprawling into the street. The left side of my face hit the asphalt and loose gravel. I sat up and touched my face. My hand came away covered with blood. I was nauseated.

Suddenly, someone was beside with a cellular phone calling 911. Someone came with a wet towel and a pillow.

I heard them ask, "Shall we get her off this wet ground?"

"Oh, no," someone else said. "We must not move her."

I couldn't see myself, but I must have looked terrible. They touched my face gently with the wet towel. I was thinking, "Why don't they just mop up the blood?" It was running into my mouth.

In moments the emergency squad was there. They immobilized me with the head and neck gear and strapped me on a back board. By that time six neighbors gathered around me.

The ambulance attendants came, put me on a stretcher and carted me off to the emergency room.

One neighbor offered to go with me and call Peggy Jo, who lives in the house with me.

The first order of the day in the emergency room was to clean my face. Then I went to X-ray, still on the back board. If my back didn't hurt before, it did now after lying on that board for an hour. The X-rays showed only a broken little finger on my left hand. The doctor gently informed me that I needed stitches under my eye and under my nose.

He deadened the tissue and said, "If it hurts, tell me, and I'll deaden it some more." I thought, "It will almost kill me before I ask for more of that needle."

Cleaned up, stitched up and with a splint on my finger, I went to meet Peggy Jo in the waiting room. I still hadn't seen myself.

"They'll think you're victim of domestic abuse," she said. I told her, "I'll just hold up my hand and say, 'You should see him!'" Can you believe I had a chance to use that the very next weekend? The moderator introduced me at a district meeting, saying, "Looks like her husband did a job on her." I came back with my

prepared statement, but you know I don't have a husband. At least it made everybody laugh.

When we got home after picking up prescriptions for antibiotic, pain pills, and muscle relaxant, the face in the mirror shocked me. Two black eyes and abrasions from above my eye to below my nose.

How could this have happened? And why? Why didn't I fall into the soft mud and grass instead of the asphalt? I don't know the answers, but I do know that I have reason to be thankful.

I found caring people lived on my street. Six people came to help me, and one, a realtor, used her cellular phone to call for help. Help came immediately, and at the emergency room, they didn't even ask me if I had insurance. I didn't break any major bones, and the break was on my left hand, not my right. The doctor wanted to put strips over the wounds when the stitches came out, but I objected, saying, "I have a speaking engagement."

"Well," he said, "They should just be glad you are there." But when the nurse removed the stitches, she said, "You don't need any strips because there is no gaping." Isn't it amazing how the Lord designed the body to heal itself? By the weekend, with a little help from concealer, my face wounds were not even visible. The doctor said I must wear the splint for six weeks.

After three and a half weeks, however, he let me substitute a strap that holds the little finger and the ring finger together. The broken finger needs a "buddy," he said. I could drive and use both hands on the keyboard again, a great relief for "Miss Independence," as one of my friends styled me.

And I got a dermabrasion and didn't even have to pay for it! ♦



Flowers in God's Bouquet

1997
WNAC Emphasis

Find out what's going on

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