

WMF BIBLE STUDY ORDER FORM

Please indicate the number of Bible study books that you wish to order in the line before the Bible Study from the list below. The individual pricing of the books follows the Bible study title.

Mail order to:

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Church _____ City/State _____

# _____	Seeing the Light of God in the Face of Christ by Vicki Johnson	\$15 each = _____
# _____	Philippians-Exuberant Joy by Angie Lombardo	\$14 each = _____
# _____	Women of Redemption by Tami D. & Michele M.	\$13 each = _____
# _____	Behold Our God by Karen, Anne, Gwen & Wendy	\$13 each = _____
# _____	A Study on 1 Timothy by Jeanette Berntson ,	\$12 each = _____

The following studies are available for the cost of postage only. We are trying to cut down on our overstock. If you know of a way to put these studies into use in neighborhood groups, nursing homes, prison ministries we would appreciate you

# _____	God's Servants Teach us Life Lessons by Beverly Enderlein
# _____	Lessons In Acts (theme study) By Joan Culler
# _____	A study in the book of COLOSSIANS by Jeanette Berntson
# _____	A Word study through the book of EPHESIANS by Kathy Horneman
# _____	Following Christ – A Disciples Walk of Faith by Vicki Johnson
# _____	Pearls for a Princess By Faylin Myhre
# _____	Joseph By Candace Johnson
# _____	Sweet Freedom's Song By Mary Christenson
# _____	Living Water By Bunny Meyer
# _____	Gift of Grace By Nancy Holcomb
# _____	Image of Christ in Women By Jane Emerson
# _____	I & II Samuel By Joanne Segerdahl & Mary Clark
# _____	Freedom's Holy Light By Mary Christenson

TOTAL _____

Make checks payable to WMF of AFLC and send your order to WMF Treasurer, Margie Lee, PO Box 118, Beulah ND 58523. You can email to margieleend@gmail.com or call 701-870-2259 with your order. Top a5 studies are as listed and can be paid for at time of ordering or billed. The ones for shipping cost will be billed to you. Thank you!

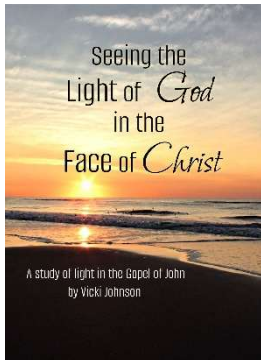
WMF Bible Study List

Below is a list of the Bible studies that are available to order. The Bible studies and order form can also be found at <https://www.aflc.org/women/resources/bible-studies/>. Orders can be made on the order form included in this manual or by contacting WMF Executive Secretary, Dawn Johnson, 2991 30th Ave Wilson WI 54027 or 715-772-4454. You may send payment with the order or be billed for the order. Books marked with *** have a limited number available.

Seeing the Light of God in the Face of Christ

A study of light from the book of John

Written by Vicki Johnson



As we study together, we'll see that God is good, and His Light reveals the sin hiding in all of us. He alone offers us the blessed remedy His light brings for redemption from sin. Without His light, we are bound up in sin and the lies it produces - we remain residents forever in the domain of darkness. We see all of this in the face of Jesus Christ. God seeks to penetrate our lives with His true, pure Light through His Son, Jesus Christ. The stories and teachings of Jesus serve to illuminate the scriptural Truth from which we learn and live.

“For God, who said, ‘Light shall shine out of darkness,’ is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.” 2 Corinthians 4:6 NASB1995

Every lesson in this Bible study begins with a **Light Cue** verse. These are statements by or about Jesus, recorded throughout the gospel of John, which pertain to the Light of God.

The 2025 WMF Bible study **Seeing the Light of God in the Face of Christ** will be \$15 each.

Philippians-Exuberant Joy by Angie Lombardo

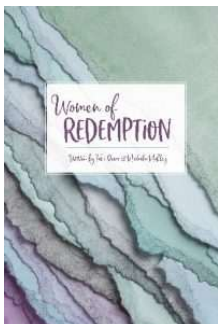


In this study, we will follow Paul, the prisoner of Christ, in his journey of genuine joy, love, grace, peace, and self-revelation. We will discover his ultimate goal in life. What was that goal? Paul desired to know Christ, to really know Him better and better, to experience the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings. This may seem to be a lofty goal, but amazingly, this goal is available to us as well. That's a heady thought! It is my prayer that we, like Paul, will experience a deep desire to know Jesus Christ better.

Come with me as we embark on a journey of Exuberant Joy!

2024 WMF Bible study **Philippians-Exuberant Joy** will be \$14 each.

Women of Redemption by Tami Demo and Michele Mobley



Throughout this Bible study we hope for you to learn that God's perfect plan does not depend on your perfect obedience but on God's perfect Sovereignty. We will look at these Old Testament women who lived imperfect lives and yet God's plans still prevailed. Be encouraged that God's will is sovereign no matter how flawed we are. Just like the women of redemption in this study, God rescues us from our sin, we are restored to a relationship with Him and through His faithfulness, we are redeemed.

“For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” Colossians 1:13-14

The 2023 WMF Bible study **Women of Redemption** will be \$13 each.

Behold Our God by Karen Floan, Anne Presteng, Gwen Berge, Wendy Westlake

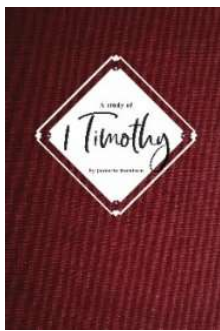


As we behold God in Psalms 90-100, we are overwhelmed with His mighty power as Creator and Ruler of heaven and earth. We are humbled by His holiness and His plan of Salvation. We see His faithfulness in our lives and throughout all generations.

Overwhelmed by joy or overtaken by sorrow, God hears the cry of our hearts, He draws us to Himself, and His presence changes us. It is the Almighty God who lovingly commands us to praise Him for our good and His glory.

This Bible study is **\$13.00 each**.

A study on 1 Timothy by Jeanette Berntson

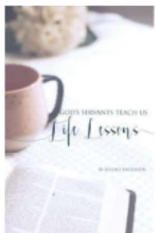


This is an inductive study on 1 Timothy. Why is what you believe important? Does it matter what we do at church? Does it matter how we live? Should we have requirements for our pastors? God has given us clear teaching on the role of the church. He wants us to hear His Word. He wants our churches' teaching and our beliefs to be the same doctrine found in the Bible. Only teaching from God's Word has the power to create repentance, faith, and love. Jesus came to save sinners and He brings His salvation to the world through His Word, preached and believed by the Church. May God bless you as you study 1 Timothy. God wrote this letter through the Apostle Paul to Timothy. Paul often refers to truths from other parts of the Bible. Timothy had studied God's Word and knew what Paul meant. To understand 1 Timothy, we will also take the time to learn what God teaches us from related Bible passages.

This Bible study is **\$12.00 each**.

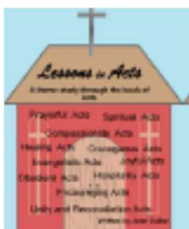
Studies from here down are for the cost of postage only.

God's Servants Teach Us Life Lessons by Beverly Enderlein



This is a study of the “old favorites” at first glance might be too familiar to be captivating. However, powerful lessons can be drawn from the real life events of God’s people through the ages. As we enjoy reading and discussing each one, we want to seek richer applications for ourselves. God’s Word is living and powerful. It is always current. Its lessons are given for our admonition and instruction. Let’s trust God to teach us as we journey together with God’s servants. (this study has 12 lessons).

LESSONS IN ACTS – A theme study through the book of Acts by Joan Culler



Instead of a chronological approach, this study will address a wide variety of themes and their applications for us. What can we learn from the early followers of Christ? How did they respond to and resolve the problems they encountered? Can we imitate the living examples of ministry described? Can we, too, “turn the world upside down?” (Acts 17:6 ESV).

A study in the book of COLOSSIANS by Jeanette Berntson



This is a letter the apostle Paul wrote to the church in Colossae. When Paul's co-worker, Epaphras, visited Paul, he related both his joy and concern for the Colossian church. False teachings were threatening the believer's faith in Christ. The Colossians were being told to gain a secret acknowledge of God, perform rituals, and refrain from certain activities to be complete Christians. Paul combats these false teachings by presenting Christ's person and work as completely sufficient for Christians salvation and daily walk. Paul also describes the Christian life that flows from the complete salvation we continue to receive from Christ. no action of ours adds anything to our standing before God. Having been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection and having received faith through the hearing of the Gospel, we are complete Christians.

A Word study through the book of EPHESIANS by Kathy Horneman



Ephesians is a very important, concise and practical book on growing in Christ. It starts with knowing Jesus Christ and moves to practical living, interacting with others, and then, how to be victorious in our walk. It touches every area of our lives, as Christ should control every area of our lives.

Following Christ – A Disciple's Walk of Faith by Vicki Johnson



We are each called to journey with our Savior, a life-long walk that is uniquely suited to each believer's development and growth in Christ. Sometimes, we are tempted to compare our walk with another's, evaluating progression, perfection and punctuality. However, the evaluation lies within Jesus' jurisdiction, with the fruit of the Spirit as evidence of our walk's success. But it isn't enough to begin the journey well. We must finish well, if we want to receive the reward. The Apostle Paul encourages us in Philippians 3:14, where he says, "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." Let's walk this walk in truth and humility with our eyes on Jesus and our hands outstretched to help others cross the finish line of faith.

Pearls for a Princess by Faylin Myhre



This study is a topical study that as you can see deals with "P" words that are associated with a princess. God **PICKED** you to be His and He **PURCHASED** you with the precious blood of Jesus. He loves you! You are **PRECIOUS** to Him. He is your **PROTECTOR** and **PROVIDER**. He has a **PURPOSE** just for you and **PREPARES** you to fulfill that purpose. You have the **POWER** of the Holy Spirit and the **PROMISES** in His Word as you daily walk in His **PRESENCE** giving Him **PRAISE**.

Joseph - An ordinary Life in the Hands of an Extraordinary God by Candice Johnson



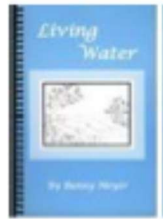
This study examines what some may consider mundane details in the life of Joseph. Let me remind ou that "all Scripture is inspired by God..." (1 Timothy 3:15a). That means God is concerned with the seemingly mundane details or they would not have been included in the Scriptures. Though no lesson focuses on FAITH, two truths are evident: 1) Joseph was faithful to God 2) God was faithful to Joseph.

Sweet Freedom's Song by Mary Christenson



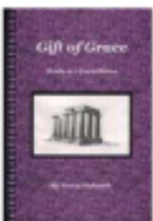
Sweet Freedom's Song will help us see how God, after preparing and giving us this land and having established this nation, has continued to be with us and work through His people throughout these decades in the United States. The biblical studies will be in the Psalms which are the ballads, hymns and songs of the Israelites. These songs express all the emotions and experiences of God's people. Still today we, God's people, continue to learn from them. We will not look so much at the political US history, but rather, the social and cultural experiences in our society from 1870 through the first quarter of the 20th century. The life applications will be reflective of people, experiences, or inventions of these times. The other portion of the study will show the direction and influence of Christians during that decade. The US history will be based out of Chicago and the Midwest. He's God, our God, in charge of the whole earth. And he remembers, remembers his Covenant – for a thousand generations He's been as good as his word. Psalm 105:7, 8.

Living Water by Bunny Meyer



Water...the precious natural resource that is essential to life. In the Scriptures we can find God's grace connected with water starting with the opening verses of Genesis. Later in this book we read how He washed our sin-stained world with the Flood, while simultaneously saving godly Noah and his family. We are led beside the still waters in the Psalms, encouraged by the promises of rain to dry land, and refreshed by the verses which tell us that His satisfies the thirsty. Jesus went into the waters of the Jordan River to be baptized by John, to fulfill all righteousness for us. He chose some of His disciples as they were fishing and later provided a miraculous catch for fish for them. He meets the Samaritan woman at the well and offers her the living water. He stills the raging waves for His fearful friends and followers and washes their feet the night before His crucifixion. As believers we look forward to the eternal rest where we will see the River of Life flowing from the throne of "God and the Lamb. "Come, all of you who are thirsty, come to the waters..." Isaiah 55:1

Gift of Grace – a Study in 1 Corinthians by Nancy Holcomb

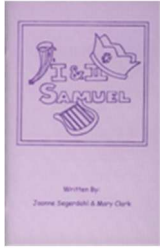


Our study of 1 Corinthians is centered on God's wonderful gift of grace which shines through in every situation that Paul addresses in this letter. We have lots to learn as we look at God's initial act of grace which secures all believers salvation and how that grace is evident in a Christian's life. We will look into the historical background of the church in Corinth and see how Paul's teachings can be applied to that young church, our churches today and to each believer in a personal and practical way so that we may all grow in "grace and holiness."

The Image of Christ in Women by Jane Emerson



Let's make it our prayer to radiate the "IMAGE OF CHRIST" daily in all that He has called us to do. "Let us go on, unto perfection" Hebrews 6:1



I & II Samuel by Joanne Segerdahl and Mary Clark

This study will take you through I & II Samuel, where you will read stories of defeat and victory, of sin, repentance, and restoration as we follow the lives of the three main characters; Samuel, Saul and David.

Freedom's Holy Light by Mary Christenson



The desire and intent of America's forefathers was to establish a country which would honor and serve God. And God, Who is faithful, sustained, guided and instructed them as they sought His Wisdom. Dedicated men and women chronicled for us God's continual leading and His provision. The evidence testifies that God has been and is ...FREEDOM'S HOLY LIGHT. Psalm 78:1.

This bible study is a full-size 8.5 x 11 book,

BIBLE STUDY HELPS

BIBLE STUDY PRIORITY FOR WOMEN'S MINISTRY

A Christ-Centered Women's Ministry must begin with a women's Bible study. If there is an active Bible study currently in session, a Christ-Centered Women's Ministry will likely evolve when given basic guidelines for organizing a Women's Ministry. If there is not a Women's Bible study within the congregation, this should be the first step in organizing a Women's Ministry.

Why begin with a women's Bible study when organizing a Women's Ministry?

1. A Christ-Centered Women's Ministry requires the participation of Christ-centered women. All church members or even all professing Christians are not Christ-centered. Therefore, the need for a Women's Bible study, which will give the opportunity for the women to develop a personal relationship with Christ and with each other.
2. When we consider the following verses, it is evident that knowing the Word is the key ingredient to a successful Women's Ministry.
 - a. "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17
 - b. "All a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the LORD." Proverbs 16:2
 - c. "All a man's ways seem right to him, but the LORD weighs the heart." Proverbs 21:2 (The Lord obviously felt this worth repeating.)
 - d. Then of course there are the verses in 1 Timothy 2:9-15 that help women recognize their areas of service and will prevent the upsetting of God's order in the church.
3. It is a good idea that a Resource Manual be written and distributed by the WMF leadership. However, we must always remember that it is only the Holy Spirit who can instill godly priorities and put them into the hearts of the women to serve the members of their church and community as Jesus would.

BIBLE STUDY HELPS

We will be blessed as we study together. As we think of the upcoming study, here are some *helpful hints* for the one who will lead the study:

1. Encourage the group members' participation. Avoid dominating and controlling the group.
2. Deal with difficult questions honestly. Be willing to say, "I don't know. Does anyone else have input?" Check with the Pastor about the answer before the next session.
3. Keep discussion Bible-centered.
4. Take advantage of silence. A good question requires time to think and respond. A few silent moments allow the group time for insight and thought. However, if prolonged, silence may indicate participants do not understand the question. After a reasonable time, use a different approach and restate the question.
5. Don't allow a particularly verbal person to monopolize group discussion. Make eye contact with others instead. Say something like: "We've had many good thoughts and ideas. Perhaps there are others of you who would like to share." Appreciate the individual who is dominating then direct the conversation to someone else.
6. Be accepting of tears and emotions. It's okay – it's healthy to cry.
7. Accentuate the positive. Say, "That's an interesting point. Thank you for sharing." This will help the women to feel affirmed and accepted.
8. Befriend group members. Free time or breaks during the meeting can be uncomfortable for those who are new to your WMF. Introduce them to others and show a personal interest in them.
9. Pray! Pray! Pray! The best preparation will be time spent in prayer!!!

Leading An Effective Bible Study

Many of us who are involved in WMF and other ministries of the church may find ourselves being asked to take a turn in leading a Bible study. Ephesians 6:10-20 contains much encouragement for the believer in her walk with Jesus that she can also apply when asked to lead a Bible study. In these scriptures, we are encouraged to put on our armor, to stand firm, and finally to pray.

“Put on the full armor of God...” God’s servants need to **be prepared** before going into battle. For the Bible study leader, of course, this means spending time going through the lesson, and asking your own questions about the lesson so that you may **anticipate and encourage questions** others may bring up. **Do not be intimidated** if you do not always have the answer for every question; as a group, you can search the Scriptures with confidence that the *“sword of the Spirit”* is always reliable and powerful. Part of the armor consists of *the belt of truth* and the *breastplate of righteousness*, found only in the Word of God, so we always take care to **emphasize the simple truth of Scripture** over and above the opinions of too many commentaries. We are also encouraged to *“have our feet shod with the readiness to share the gospel”* so this means **being ready to share the way of salvation** if the opportunity arises.

Once our armor is in place we are told several times in this passage to *“stand firm”*. Leading a study is a great opportunity for you to **apply the Scriptures to your own life first** so that your own life is standing on a firm foundation. You may want to **share how the lesson applies to your life**, and to pose some open-ended questions to **give opportunity for others to share** as well. You are the facilitator to make sure no one person, including the leader, dominates the study! It is important to be **gentle** as well as firm and to **keep healthy time boundaries** on discussions, so the study does not drag. One hour is a good time limit; start and stop on time.

Finally, *pray, pray and pray* some more. Once we have studied the lesson and applied it to our own lives, it is time to let the Lord lead the study. **Ask the Holy Spirit to be your guide** throughout your preparation and during the study through **prayer**. Ephesians 6: 12 emphasizes that Christians’ struggles are not against flesh and blood; therefore, neither should we try to do spiritual ministry in our own human strength. **Pray not only for yourself as you lead, but for the other Bible students’ hearts to be open to the Word of God.** Our *“shield of faith”* reminds us that the Bible is not just a book written by human hands, it is a living, supernatural means God uses to impart grace to its readers. **Have faith that the Scriptures can speak** to every soul and every need of every individual in the group as you lead them through the study, and rest in the knowledge that **He does need a perfect messenger to convey His perfect message!**

While leading a Bible study is a tremendous responsibility, it need NOT fill you with fear and trembling! Let me encourage you to put your armor on and step out to serve the Lord in this way!

Devotional Life, *A New Journaling Idea*

Barbara (Elmquist) Gustafson, Mesa, AZ

*“The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up,
and He let NONE OF HIS WORDS FALL TO THE GROUND!”*

I Samuel 3:19

As I read this verse a couple of years ago, I was struck with this thought: “God is so **careful** with the words of Samuel – and I am so **careless** with the Word of God!” I am thrilled as I read the Word of God and the Holy Spirit brings some passage or verse alive to me. No other words can touch the heart as God’s Word can. But my heart is saddened to realize that many times God blesses me through His Word and I am so quick to forget the blessing. I have kept a journal, but how many times do I go back and read what I have written? Seldom!

As I read I Samuel 3:19, I was struck with a new journaling idea. It took me a while, but I finally put this new idea into practice in 2003, and it has been a great blessing to me.

- (1) Purchase a simple 3-ring binder and divide it into 31 sections (1 for each day of the month).
- (2) As you have your devotions each day, write out the scripture that speaks to your heart in the section for that day of the month. Some days it is a single verse – others, a longer passage. You may choose to add thoughts of your own – simply write the Word of God.

The blessing comes as I add to the journal, reviewing the previous month's verses for that day. For example, I wrote in my journal on July 1st: “*A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*” “*A cheerful look brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the bones*” (Proverbs 15:1,30). Then I reviewed January’s entry – Genesis 4:7 “*If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it.*” Then I wrote, “What an important reminder as I begin each month. Sin is always lurking – trying to have me, but with God’s help, I must master it!”

February 1st was Numbers 10:35, 36; 12:3! March 1st – I Samuel 8:7! April 1st – *And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve Him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the Lord searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever*” (I Chronicles 28:9)! Then I wrote, “I will never forget the last words that my own father spoke to me. Although Solomon didn’t heed his father’s advice, I’m sure he never forgot these final words of David.” May

1st – “*But He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I will come forth as gold*” (Job 23:10)! June – Psalm 73:26!

God has richly blessed my life through this practice of review. It is my heart’s desire not to let any of God’s Words fall to the ground, but rather to treasure them in my heart.

BIBLE STUDY- SEARCHING SCRIPTURE

By Jan Strand

The FBI-you have most likely heard those initials before. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is the domestic intelligence and security service of the United States. When exploring a different way to meet the needs of some of the women of our congregation, our WMF group used these initials but applied a different meaning to them. Although sometimes met with a giggle when announced, the "Female Bible Investigators" was founded.

Our WMF booklet describes it this way: "This Bible study group will meet the second and fourth Saturdays of the month at 8 a.m. Place, times and dates may be changed to accommodate needs. Lessons will be done as a group effort at the meeting. This is a casual group-just come as you are."

That's right. Come as you are. And we do. Our goal has been to present a flexible and low-pressure atmosphere. Some from other congregations who are unable to attend their own women's meetings have been invited and come. God has blessed this group. Lively and deep discussion comes from the Word and the WMF Bible study booklet. Although we are not always on the lesson of the month-we meet more than the monthly groups-we find that we take more time to complete a lesson. Coffee is allowed and encouraged.

This has worked for us. So many of our women are unable to attend the strong, well-established core groups that meet on a weekday once a month. We felt we needed to find a way to include women who are in that situation. Having a relatively early Saturday time also allows for unhurried prayer time. We established early on that confidentiality was important, so we can share one another's burdens without worry. Tears and laughter happen often, sometimes simultaneously.

Perhaps the definition of the real FBI might be closer than we initially realized. Perhaps we are developing a domestic and security service for the families of our women. We praise Him for providing for us.

An apt portion of Scripture comes from Hebrews 10:24-25, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another-and all the more as you see the day approaching."

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

The *Voice of the Martyrs* is an organization started by Richard Wurmbrandt who was imprisoned in the Soviet Union for serving Christ.

The organization provides opportunity to find out how Christians are dealing with persecution in many parts of the world. *Voice of the Martyrs* provides materials to help us become both informed and to have opportunity to minister to those living in areas of persecution. Their resources include books, video presentations with discussion guides, and periodicals that keep Christians informed of what is happening to the persecuted church around the world.

We in the United States have been largely isolated from what many brothers and sisters in Christ have experienced and are experiencing elsewhere today. The materials provided by *Voice of the Martyrs* can help us realize what we have, be more thankful for it, and to be more involved in helping others that are not so blessed. Knowing how Christians are treated elsewhere can help us prepare for what may be part of our future.

PROGRAM IDEAS

Cradle Roll Program

By Kathy Klenner



THEME: God made me Special

Psalm 139:14 "for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

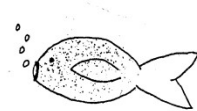
Cradle Roll programs are designed to honor children who were baptized recently or who are now graduating into Sunday School. Use this program to fit the needs of your church! Send out invitations, remember to invite grandmas too.

WELCOME guests and briefly explain cradle roll.

- Share the theme verse from Psalm 139:14.
- As an ICE BREAKER have everyone look at the palms of their hands and show their neighbor how unique and fascinatingly different the lines in our hands are.
- Open with prayer.

SUGGESTED SONGS:

- Jesus Loves Me
- My God Is So Big (Wee Sing Sunday School Songs)
- If I Were a Butterfly (Sing 'n' Celebrate for Kids, Volume II)



BIBLE STORY: Tell the creation story from Genesis 1 or use a child's story book on creation or use this simple finger play as your story from Genesis 1.

GOD MADE THE WORLD

Genesis 1

Who made the sun?
(Form circle with arms.)
God made the sun.
(Point upward.)
Who made the birds?
(Move hands in flying motion.)
God made the birds.
(Point upward.)

God made you and God made me.
(Point upward, to others, to self.)
Thank you, God, for the world we see.
Amen *(All bow heads.)*
-Ruth Odor

Who made the trees?
(Hold arms upward.)
God made the trees.
(Point upward.)
Who made you and who made me?
(Point to others and then to self.)

ANOTHER FINGER PLAY: Here's my fingers
Here's my toes
I'm unique to the tip of my nose!

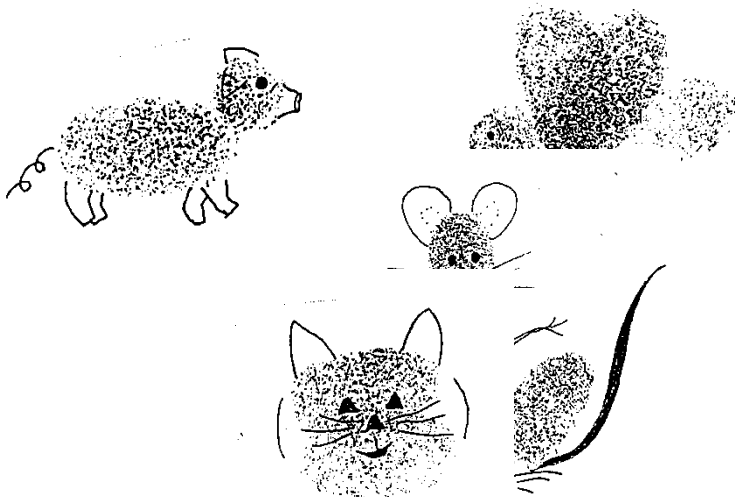
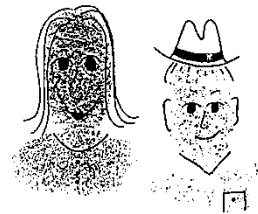
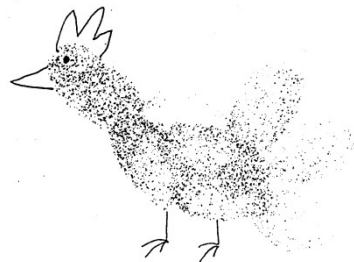
ART: Make thumbprint people and animals. See the copy, and use your imagination. Simply press thumbs or fingers on a black stamp pad and press on the paper, use colored pens if you like to add special features. Have wet wipes handy to clean up fingers.

FOOD: Thumbprint cookies

BULLETIN BOARD: The background could be white paper filled with black thumbprints and big letters of black paper on top saying "I'M UNIQUE." Add the bible Verse across the bottom in red letters.

CLOSING: Use the following responsive reading with the children.

ADULT: God made the light and air!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ADULT: God made land and water!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ADULT: God made the flowers and trees!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ADULT: God made the fruit!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ADULT: God made the sun, moon and stars!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ADULT: God made the fish, birds and animals!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ADULT: God made Adam and Eve!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ADULT: God made me!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ALL: Thank you! Thank you! Thank you, Jesus!



CRADLE ROLL

PROGRAM

Theme: God's Gift of Creation



1. Welcome and Prayer
2. Song: "Beautiful Savior"
3. "My Prayer" fingerplay
4. Special fingerplays done by a group of preschool or kindergarten age children.
 - A. "Animals"
 - B. "A Way To Go"
5. Object Lesson: God's Gift of Creation
6. Teach "God Made the World" fingerplay. Encourage the Cradle Roll children to take part in the fingerplay.
7. Briefly explain Cradle Roll objectives and goals.
8. Enroll new babies.

Read names of present Cradle Roll members.
Present certification of promotion to Cradle Roll graduates.
9. Closing Prayer
10. Children can be taken to an art table to make their choice of art work and can then join their parent(s) for refreshments. Or, children can have refreshments by themselves while someone reads a story like "counting Katie's Gifts." This would allow the parents a time of uninterrupted fellowship.
11. Take Cradle Roll children outside for a CREATION HUNT and make Creation Books.

CREATION BOOKS

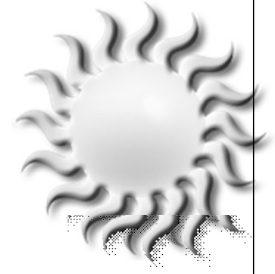
Use 3-5 Zip-Lock bags for each child. Staple the bags together on the folded end. Cover the bags with felt, fabric or paper and write on the cover "My Creation Book." Make one book for each child. Take the children on a Creation Walk and have them fill their Zip-Lock bags with all sorts of created things. (The Zip-Lock bag allows them to continue to add to their collection even after they've taken their book home.)

*Counting Katie's Gifts, 1988, Standard publishing, Cincinnati, OH (A Happy Day Book). Author: El Louise Price.

FINGERPLAYS

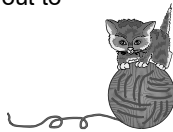
MY PRAYER

Thank you, God,
For flowers bright,
(cup hands flower-like)
For grass so green,
(Hands, palms downward, move
outward horizontally.)
For soft moonlight,
(Point upward.)
For butterflies,
(flap arms)
For wind that blows;
(Palms together at side of waist
come quickly to other side.)
For all our world
(Arm outstretched.)
We thank you so!
(Hands clasped, head bowed.)
--Ruth Vaughn



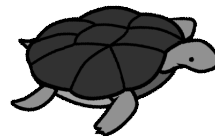
ANIMALS

Puppy dogs and kitty cats,
(Pretend to pet dog on one side and
cat on other side of chair.)
And ponies standing tall,
(Hold hand up high as if measuring height)
Tiny chicks and woolly lambs
(Hands together to hold tiny chick; then
pretend to hold lamb in arms.)
Our great God made them all.
(Point upward, then stretch arms out to
indicate all the animals.)
--Jean Katt



A WAY TO GO

A robin flies,
(Wave arms in flying motion)
A bunny hops,
(Hop up and down)
A turtle crawls so slow;
(Move legs up and down very slowly.)
God gave each animal He made
(Point to sky.)
A special way to go!
(Take two fingers and walk them up the
arm, or walk in place.)
--Jean Shannon



FINGER PLAYS

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For flowers bright,
(cup hands flower-like)
For grass so green,
(Hands, palms downward, move
outward horizontally.)
For soft moonlight,
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(Palms together at side of waist
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For all our world
(Arm outstretched.)
We thank you so!
(Hands clasped, head bowed.)
--Ruth Vaughn



GOD MADE THE WORLD Genesis 1

1) Who made the sun?

(Form circle with arms.)

2) God made the sun.

(Point upward.)

1) Who made the birds?

(Move hands in flying motion.)

2) God made the birds.

(Point upward.)

1) Who made the trees?

(Hold arms upward.)

2) God made the trees.

(Point upward.)

1) Who made you and who made me?

(Point to others and then to self.)

2) God made you and God made me.

(Point upward, to others and to self)

Thank you, God, for the world you
made. Amen

(All bow heads and say together..)

NOTE: Teacher takes 1) and children 2); or
divide class into two groups.

--Ruth Odor



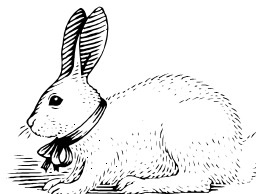
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GOD'S GIFT OF CREATION
(The story of Creation)
(Object Lesson)

(You may use "Box Full of Surprises" for this object lesson. You will find instructions at the end of this lesson.)

(Teach the children the phrase: "And God saw that it was good," and have them repeat it after each day of creation.)

Long, long ago there were no boys and girls, no men and women, no dogs or cats, or elephants or other animals, no birds, or butterflies, no sun in the sky, no green growing things on the ground. There was no world at all! There was nothing but GOD! God always lived. But He had no boys and girls to Jove Him, no men and women to praise Him.

DAY 1 - Genesis 1:1-5

Before God made people, He wanted to have a lovely home ready for them. God can make things by just speaking. He looked at the great blackness. "Let there be light!" (pull out white or yellow piece of construction paper) He said. At once there was the lovely bright morning light. God divided the light from the darkness (pull out a black piece of construction paper). He called the light "Day" and the darkness He called "Night". AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

DAY 2 - Genesis 1:6-8

Then God said, "Let there be a sky above (pull out cotton ball-clouds) and water beneath (pull out a piece of dark blue construction paper). And at once it was done. That was the second day. AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

DAY 3 - Genesis 1:9-13

On the third day God said, "Let the water be gathered together into seas and lakes, (pull out a picture of lake-ocean) and let the dry land be seen (pull out a landscape picture). The dry land He named "Earth" and the water He called "Seas". God saw that what He had made was good. So He said, "Let the green grass grow on the earth. (pull out a picture of grass or glue real grass onto a piece of paper) Let plants and trees grow (pull out a picture of plants and trees or real plants glued on paper) Let the plants and trees have seeds so that more plants and trees will grow." (glue some apple seeds, acorns, pine cones, etc. on a piece of paper and pull out of the box) AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

DAY 4- Genesis 1:14-19

On the fourth day God said, "Let there be lights in the sky to divide the day from the night, and to give light to the earth." He made the sun (pull out a picture of the sun) for the daytime and the moon (pull out a picture of the moon) and stars (pull out the picture of stars) for the nighttime. AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

DAY 5 - Genesis 1:20-23

On the fifth day God said, "Let fish (pull out the picture of fish) swim in the water and birds (pull out the picture of birds) fly in the air." He made small and great fish, and many kinds of flying things. AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

DAY 6 - Genesis 1:24-31

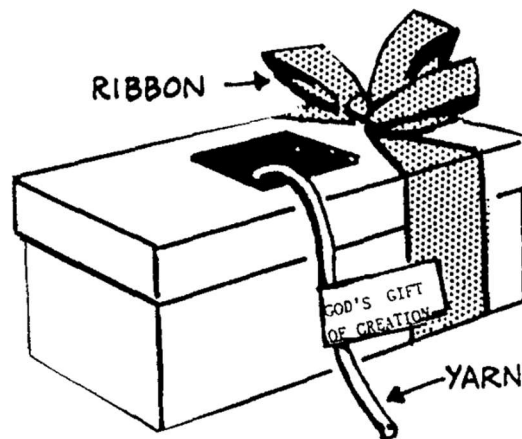
On the sixth day God said, "Let there be animals upon the earth." (pull out the picture(s) of various animals) And at once there were all kinds of animals walking and hopping and running and creeping upon the earth. All of them were made by God.

At last the lovely world was ready for people. Finally God made a man and a woman (pull out pictures of people) to live in the beautiful home which he had made for them. AND GOD SAW ALL THAT HE HAD MADE, AND BEHOLD, IT WAS VERY GOOD.

DAY 7 - Genesis 2:1-3

And so He rested on the seventh day.

BOX FULL OF SURPRISES



MATERIALS:

Shoe box, gift wrap, scissors, yarn, small gifts, tissue paper, napkins, 3" X 5" card.

PROCEDURE:

1. Cut a 3" X 3" hole in the top of the shoe box. Wrap the box with gift wrap, leaving the hole open in the top.
2. Obtain a long piece of colorful yarn and the pictures for each day of creation (see creation story).
3. Tie each picture onto the yarn. Insert the yarn into the box one picture at a time.
4. Leave one end of the yarn out. Tie a card on the end of the yarn. Write on the card "God's Gifts of Creation."
5. Pull out one picture at a time as they appear in the creation account.

GOD'S GIFT OF CREATION
(Cradle Roll objectives and goals)

From my heart to yours

I'd like to share with you my concern that our little children be taught to give God the praise for all that is. Even our preschoolers are exposed to teachings about "Mother Nature", "Mother Earth", evolution, etc. There is a trend in our society to attribute divine power to such created things as the wind, the sun, the earth, fire and other things.

Our children are never too young to be taught that God is the creator of all things.

This program has 3 objectives:

1. To teach the children that God created all things.
2. To let each child know that he/she is special because God created them.
3. To thank God for all He made.

Use the "Box Full Of Surprises" (see directions) to keep the children's attention as you tell the story of creation. For each day of creation, find or draw a picture to correspond with what was created. When a specific picture cannot be found, simply use a colored piece of paper to symbolize what was created (i.e.: "light" - use white or yellow construction paper, etc.)

Encourage the children to identify the items of creation as you pull them out of the box. The first few days may be difficult but as you come to more familiar items it will get easier.

ADDITIONAL IDEAS OF DECORATIONS, ETC.

SPOOL ANIMAL

A spool animal (see directions) can be made for each child. Write the child's name on the front of a card and the verse, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." (Ps. 139:14), on the back. Tie it around the animal's neck with twine or string.

CREATION ROCKS

Pick nice, smooth rocks (one for each child) to decorate with colored markers. You can draw creation pictures on the rock, print a Bible verse about creation (ie: Gen.1:31a; Ps. 139:14), or print the child's name. (or any combination of the above - Be Creative!)

CREATION PLACEMATS

Decorate a piece of construction paper with pictures of created things and cover with clear contact paper (leaving a 1/4-in. border). Use on the table at each place setting.

IDEAS FOR REFRESHMENTS

JIGGLERS

4 packages (4-serving size each) OR 2 packages (8-serving size each) JELL-C Gelatin, any flavor
2 1/2 cups boiling water

Pour gelatin into bowl. Add 2 1/2 cups boiling water to gelatin. Stir with a rubber scraper until gelatin is completely dissolved, about 2 minutes.

Pour into 9x13-inch pan. Put pan into refrigerator to chill until firm, about 3 hours. Take pan out of refrigerator. Put about 1 inch of warm water in sink. Dip just bottom of pan into warm water for 15 seconds.

Use animal shape cookie cutters to cut gelatin into any shapes you wish. (If you do not have animal shape cookie cutters, cut gelatin into squares with a table knife.)

Lift shapes out of pan with your fingers. Makes about 24 small shapes.

JIGGLERS, CREAMY-STYLE

4 packages (4-serving size each) OR 2 packages (8-serving size each) JELL-C Gelatin, any flavor
2 1/2 cups boiling water
1 cup cold milk
1 package (4-serving size) JELL-C Instant Pudding, Vanilla Flavor

Pour gelatin into bowl. Add 2 1/2 cups boiling water to gelatin. Stir with rubber scraper until gelatin is completely dissolved, about two minutes. Cool to room temperature, about 30 minutes.

Pour 1 cup of cold milk into shaker. Add pudding mix. Put lid on shaker very tightly. Shake very hard for at least 1 minute. (Be sure to hold top and bottom of shaker tightly.)

Open shaker. Pour pudding quickly into gelatin. Stir with wire whisk until mixture is all the same color. Pour into 9X13-inch pan. Put pan into refrigerator to chill until firm, about 3 hours.

Use animal shape cookie cutters to cut gelatin into any shape you wish. Lift shapes out of pan with your fingers.

DIRT CUPS

2 cups cold milk
1 package (4-serving size) JELL-O Instant Pudding, Chocolate Flavor
3 1/2 cups (8-ounce container) COOL WHIP Whipped Topping, thawed
1 package (16 ounces) chocolate sandwich cookies, crushed, divided
Pour 2 cups of cold milk into bowl. Add pudding mix. Beat with wire whisk until well blended, about 2 minutes. Let pudding stand 5 minutes.

Stir whipped topping and 1/2 of the crushed cookies into pudding very gently with rubber scraper until mixture is all the same color. Place about 1 tablespoon of the remaining crushed cookies into bottom of each paper or plastic cup.

Fill cups about 3/4 full with pudding mixture. Top each cup with the rest of the crushed cookies. Put cups into refrigerator to chill until set, about 1 hour. Garnish with silk or plastic flowers, candy worms, frogs or bugs, if you wish.

Makes 8 to 10 Dirt Cups

Spool Animal

Materials: Spool Animal Patterns (including ear patterns), spools (or tissue rolls cut in two), construction paper, glue, scissors, cotton balls for sheep, yarn and photocopy machine. Optional—scraps of black, pink and brown felt, wiggle eyes.

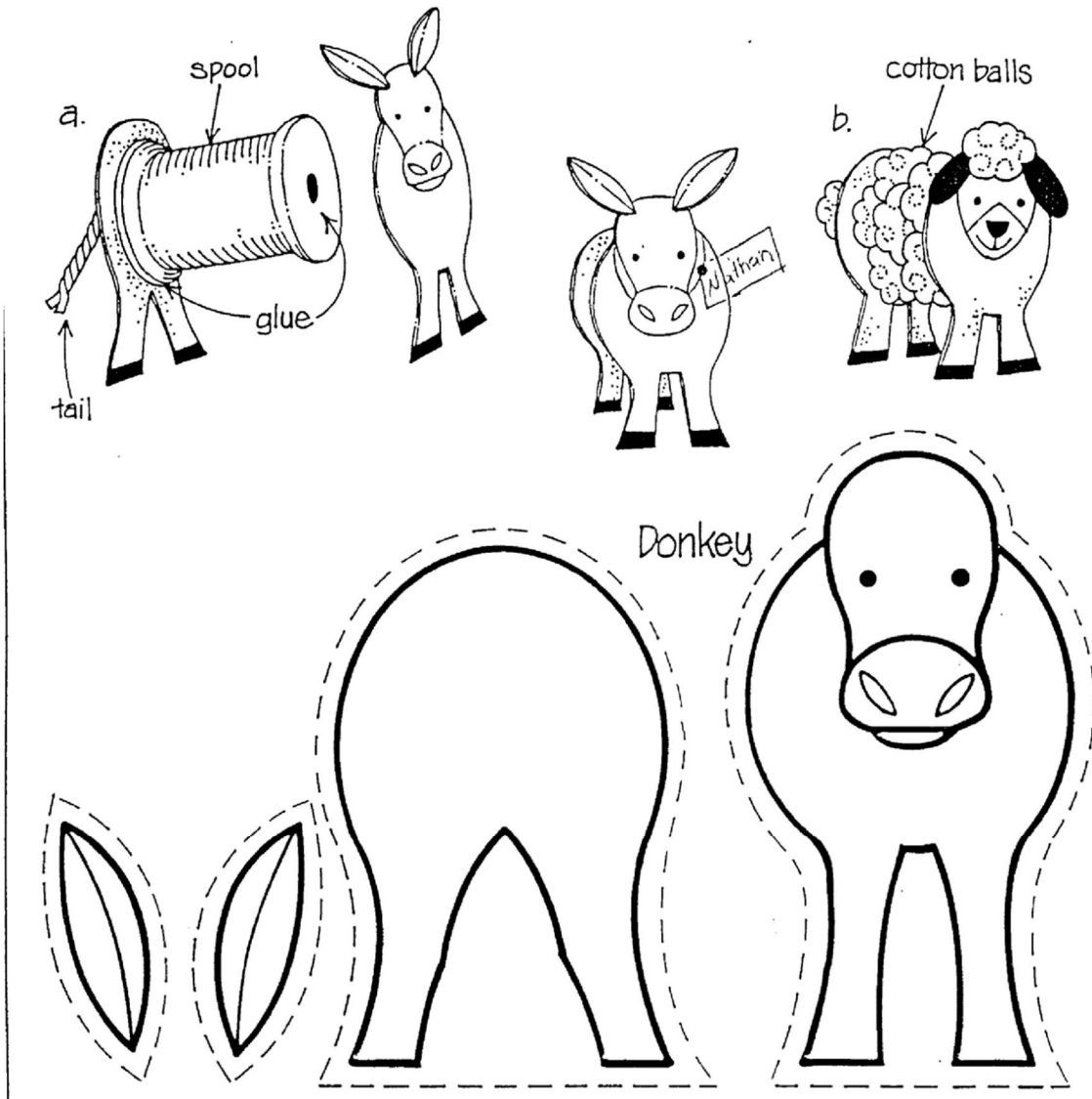
Preparation: Choose an animal related to the lesson for each child to make. Photocopy Animal Pattern onto construction paper—one for each child. Cut yarn into 2- inch (5-cm) lengths for Donkey, Cow or Pig tails.

Instruct each child in the following procedures:

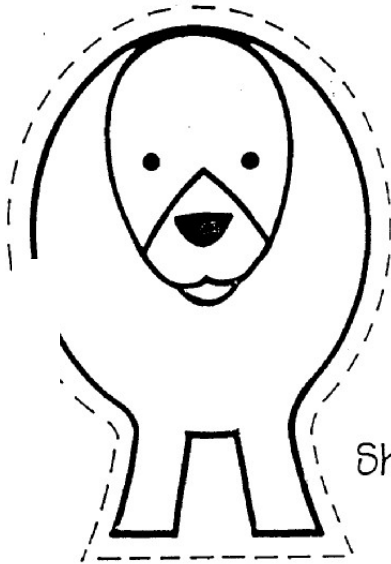
- Use scissors to cut out Animal Pattern pieces.
- Glue yarn or cotton ball to back piece for tail.
- Glue ears to animal's head. Let dry.
- Glue front and back body pieces to spool (sketch a). For lamb, glue cotton balls to spool (sketch b).

Enrichment Idea: Children glue felt ears (cut out b teacher) and wiggle eyes to animal.

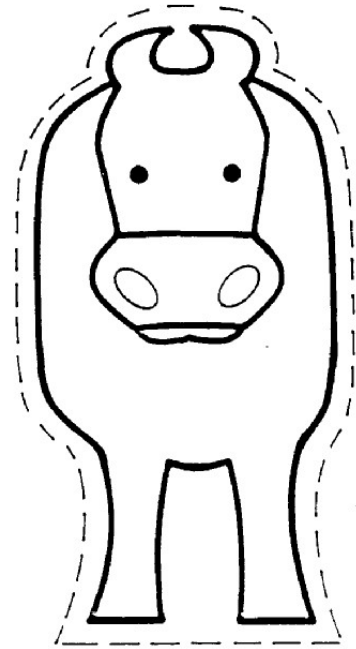
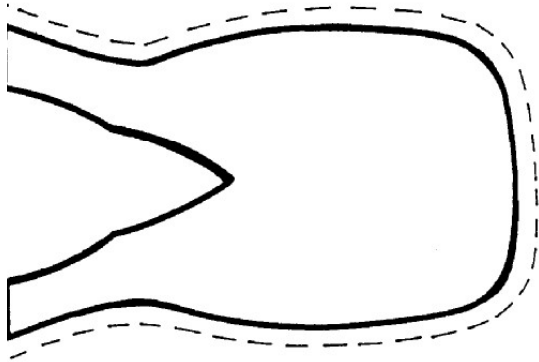
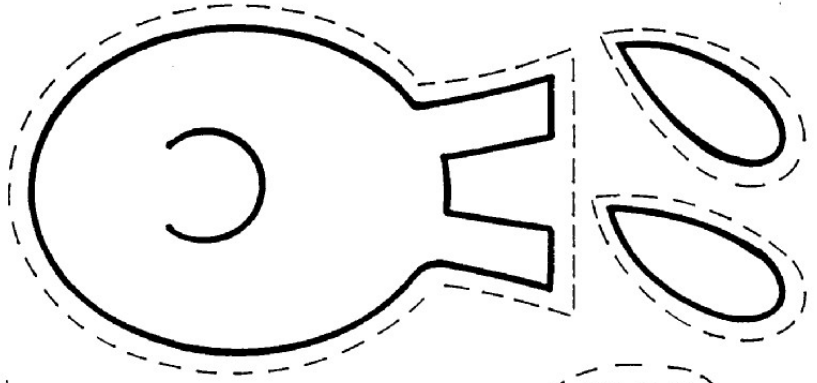
Conversation Suggestions: What kind of animal did you make? What kind of animal did we hear about in our Bible story? When you go home, who will you tell about our Bible story?



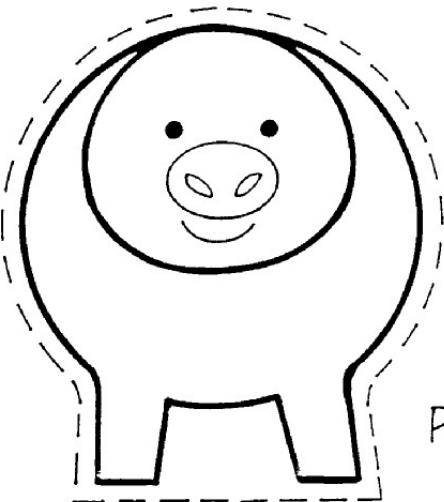
Spool Animal Patterns



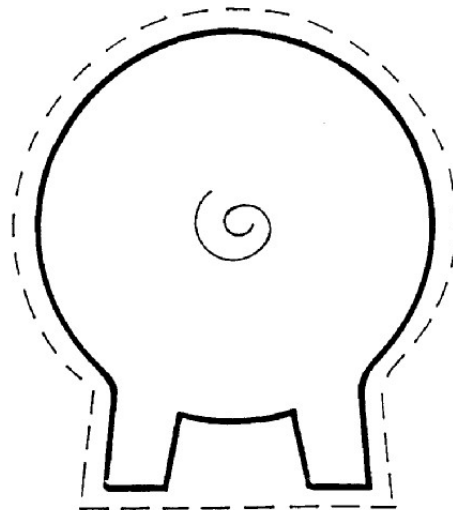
Sheep



Cow



Pig



CRADLE ROLL PROGRAM

DANIEL AND THE LIONS DEN

Daniel 6:1-23

By Mary Pollestad

PURPOSE: Teach the children in their language and understanding that we must always follow what God wants us to do. No matter what, God will take care of the situation and us. Teach the children to trust even though they can't see the outcome.

TELLING THE STORY: Tell the story in your own words including the use of pictures or flannel graph. Consider purchasing a hardcover book to tell the story. (Hardcover books can be purchased at Michaels Craft, grocery stores, or Christian bookstores. Purchase enough books for every child to take home.)

SONG: Teach the children the song "Dare To Be A Daniel." (Sing the song before the story and after. Follow up with singing the song during craft time.)

CRAFT: Lion Magnet for fridge.

DECORATIONS: If you will serve a little lunch, you can have brown and yellow napkins. You could serve animal crackers as one of the little snacks. (You could pick out all the lions if you wish.)

MATERIALS FOR CRAFT:

- Find a small picture of a lion that you can trace.
- Go to Kinko's or another print shop and ask them to print the patterns you have made on to brown card stock.
- Purchase puzzle pieces from Michaels craft store.
- Purchase wiggly eyes from Michaels craft store.
- Orange and brown paint (spray or liquid)
- Purchase magnets to glue on the back of the lion.

Cut around the lions on the brown cardstock. Draw the face on the lion leaving room for the wiggly eyes. Draw the tail on the body. Spray paint the puzzle pieces with brown and orange paint or brush paint them. After the paint is dry hot glue the orange and brown pieces around the lions head to form the mane. Pieces overlap each other a little. Glue magnet on the back of the lion so that the lion can be put on the fridge at home. The children could probably glue the eyes on the lion or put the magnet on the back of the lion, otherwise the lions will pretty much have to be done before the cradle roll party. Once again emphasizing all of the time how God takes care of us. He protected Daniel from the lions' mouths. How we should always do what God tells us to do and He will work everything out for us.

Program for Elementary Age Children

We have the privilege of sharing activities with elementary age children and encouraging them in mission service at home and abroad. This could be done on a monthly basis during the school year or the summer. Providing activities give the children opportunities to grow through service.

A variety of activities that children can participate in are the following:

- Praying and witnessing
- Doing for others, i.e. for the elderly they may rake leaves, vacuum, polish furniture, run errands, etc.
- Making crafts
- Visiting and giving programs at nursing homes
- Becoming acquainted with the missionaries and their families
- Writing to missionary children
- Collecting items for the mission field (A list of suggested items is included in the Resource Manual or available from the Executive Secretary.)
- Preparing greeting cards for Brazil with Portuguese verses (Verses are available from the AFLC World Mission office.)
- Creating a logo that might be used on flyers, posters or T-shirts
- Encouraging the children to give monies to support a child or national worker in India or one of our other mission fields.

It is important to keep the goal of a mission emphasis in Sunday School, Vacation Bible School and any special group that meets on a regular basis.

MISSIONS IN SUNDAY SCHOOL

Missions is carrying out the call the Lord has given for you to do for Him whether in your home town, in another state or across the world in another country.

Matthew 28:18-20 “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go (while you are going – Greek) therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.”

SUGGESTIONS

1. Missions Sunday – One Sunday a month, instead of breaking into classes, focus on missions. Show DVDs, present projects, read mission stories, etc.
2. Missionary of the Month – Each Sunday School opening, spend 5 minutes: showing picture of missionary and family, telling about their ministry, sharing some of their stories, and collect a special Sunday School offering for them.
3. Create Fun Ways to Collect Funds for Missions
 - Little Red Wagon (Coins)
 - Baby Bottle (Miriam Infant Home)
 - Yard Sale Proceeds
 - Mission Dinners
 - Ideas?
4. Crafts to Reinforce the Mission You Are Presenting

For example: Candy Airplanes – Size 16 rubber bands, life savers, Smarties, Bible verse on stickers (1/2” x 1 3/4 “), gum, snack size baggies. Put rubber band through two life savers (tires). Put gum (wings) into two loose rubber band ends. Next slide in the Smarties (fuselage) in between the life savers. Put Bible verse stickers on the gum (wings). You now have a candy mission airplane – carrying the gospel to the world.
5. Expose Sunday School Students to Real Missionaries

If any missionaries are in the area, have them come to speak with the children for a special Sunday School hour.
Have Sunday School children host missionaries in their homes.
6. Survey

How many of you asked Jesus to be your Lord and Savior before the age of 13?
How many of you were called into missions before the age of 13?

HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO EXPOSE THE LITTLE ONES TO JESUS AND MISSIONS AT AN EARLY AGE!!!!

RESOURCES

Websites:

www.aflcworldmissions.org/wm/resources/vbs-project-ideas.htm

www.aflchomemissions.org/alaska/new-overview

www.ministry-to-children.com/missionary-stories-for-kids/

www.missionsfestinternational.org

www.jaars.org

www.wycliffe.org

www.maf.org

www.ntm.org

www.ntm.org/aviation

AFLC Resources:

World Missions – www.aflc.org (World Missions Tab)

- Request DVDs of missionaries (Paul & Becky Abel Brazil Presentation 2010), missionary prayer letters, special projects lists, SS and VBS ideas.

Home Missions – www.aflc.org (Home Missions Tab)

- AK Mission (see above info)

Ambassador Publications Catalog

- “Missions for Children” – Visual Stories and Other Resources
- Various Mission DVDs in DVD Section

Ambassador Publications also has a lending library for a small fee for postage and handling.

Missionary Books:

Missionary Chronicles, Ambassador Publications

Short missionary stories from our own AFLC missionaries and other missionaries connected to the AFLC.

50 Years Under the Southern Cross by John H. Abel, Mercy & Truth Publishers

John and Ruby Abel’s missionary adventures in Brazil as told by John.

Operation World by Jason Mandryk, Biblica Publishing

1-2 page summaries of countries all over the world. Good prayer guide for specific countries.

Other Places to Find Mission Books:

Christian Book Distributors, Christian Book Stores, Amazon, Used Book Stores, etc.

Adapted from workshop by Carol Knapp

The church that is mission minded is a church that grows. When we look outside ourselves and our own congregation to the needs of others, in our community or across the sea, we gain new perspectives and understanding into the Body of Christ.

CHOOSE YOUR EMPHASIS ACCORDING TO ACTS 1:8 Is your emphasis local ministries?(Jerusalem) State or United States ministries? (Judea, Samaria) International Ministries? (end of earth)

Local/U.S.

Pregnancy Center

Shelter House

Food Shelf

Thrift Store

Ethnic groups: Hispanics, Somalis, etc

International

AFLC Missions: Brazil, Mexico, India

AFLC Missionaries who are on loan to:

Eastern European Missions Network

Lutheran Mission Society (Alaska)

World Mission Prayer League

CHOOSE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE children only? Adults only? Youth only? Everyone together?

IDEAS FOR PLANNING A MISSION FESTIVAL?

- 1) set up booths or stations in your fellowship hall or church basement. Set out books from your church library that teach about missions.
- 2) set up several classrooms for different subjects and groups rotate through them. Research a missionary family and the country they are in, then fix up each classroom to show an aspect of that country and the missionary and his work, family: i.e. food, music, people, geography/topography, etc.
- 3) decorate one larger classroom with pictures from National Geographic magazine and local photos. Local/world. In the classroom, have a missionary video (list available from AFLC Parish Ed.) or computer game (Wycliffe has a computer game to show what a Bible translator would do)
- 4) do a hands- on project art project
- 5) invite a missionary speaker on furlough, someone who was a short-term missionary to another country, a student from Ministry Training Institute (MTI) – contact AFLC, an international student studying in a local college.
- 6) serve food from a foreign country
- 7) music-teach a familiar chorus in another language
- 8) write letters/e-mails to missionaries
- 9) hang a current map of the world and make a game of identifying the countries
- 10) current map of the world with photos of missionaries and a string or arrow showing where they are stationed.
- 11) Give a book report on an missionary story
- 12) power point presentations or videos from AFLC Missions.

Much depends on how much time and energy goes into planning and organizing a Mission Festival.

Be creative – Use the talents in your congregation!

IDEAS FOR PROPOSED
MISSION FESTIVALS

AND OTHER MISSION IDEAS
(Submitted by Delores Berkas, Bloomington, MN)

For Mission Festivals, we took a whole Sunday School morning and the whole church basement. We used signs, maps, pictures – lots of color. We used the kitchen counter with the sliding doors used when serving food partway open as our puppet stage. The puppet story emphasized “home missions” through a story about Rusty inviting a neighbor to Sunday School.

We used large cardboard boxes to make awnings, hung over the wires that normally hold our curtains—we scalloped one and painted it with tempera paints in red and white stripes. We covered one with overlapping pieces of brown wrapping paper to simulate a thatch roof. One of these was a place for the display of some artifacts. We had stations – kids went to a certain area for each country to hear short reports on the country and missionaries that had been written and researched by Sunday School teachers and students. These were sort of like radio broadcasts. There was another area with a short video on one of our missionaries. We taught a song in a foreign language. We used lots of pictures from National Geographic – mounted on construction paper, in the booths for India, Brazil and Mexico. Once we borrowed the flags from the mission office. A game was invented by one of our members, Jim Keller, similar to “Where in the World is Carmen San Diego?” It taught the kids the location of the cities where our missionaries work. We also gave some prizes. We had several things from Brazil and India.

And of course we served food. I made samosas, a favorite snack from our children’s growing-up years in Madagascar, but it is also served elsewhere. They are easy to make. It’s a little browned ground beef with onion in a wonton square and deep-fried in oil. One can make a lot of them in an hour. We also served candied peanuts, orange and pineapple slices, etc.

There are many ideas here, and not all would have to be used at one time. We had done parts of this before and since then, too. The variety and excitement of that morning was great. This is a lot for a morning, but we had lots of volunteers to help.

One year, we did a missionary quiz as part of WMF – having the ladies in groups and asking them to name the missionaries and their children, etc. – some serious and some funny questions. We gave out missionary prayer cards (from World Missions) to each one and a notebook to keep them as a prayer journal, encouraging them to pray for them by name.

Our WMF sends birthday cards to the missionaries each month and several boxes a year. That does help keep some more awareness.

A SHORT video – perhaps from one missionary a year (up-to-date) – could be shown at a WMF meeting. It takes frequent exposure to let people know what is happening. People who have visited the mission field, such as Paul and Laurie Nash (Brooklyn Park, MN) or Elden and Faith Nelson (Rockford, MN) have a real passion for missions and are willing to share their experiences. There are many others – possibly some from your area – that could be contacted to share in your congregation.

MISSION FESTIVAL IDEAS
(submitted by Elaine Kohl, Brookings, SD)

Make a large map of our mission lands. Show major cities and perhaps also show crops, topography, birds, animals, mining and other activities with pictures on the map. Then name the areas where we have mission families or mission congregations, Bible school, etc. Use pictures and/or names of each family and attach by string or yarn to where they live.

Enlarging on this idea, a booth could be made for each missionary family in our AFLC. A family or individual could be responsible for one mission family booth. They could find out as much as possible about the missionaries, the country and place where they work, and the work itself. They can have prayer cards (from World Missions) or the new prayer books to pass out and be a source of information for all who pass by.

* * * * *

We are told that many people in the world go to bed hungry. As Americans, this is hard for us to comprehend. A way to demonstrate this is to serve what many in the world eat.

At our church, two different menu's were served; one a typical American meal with meat, potatoes, vegetable, salad, dessert and beverage; the second – a very small serving of rice and beans and water. As you entered, you drew a slip of paper to see which meal you would get.

Having rice and beans and water was all the more difficult when you sat next to someone who had a full meal.

We found this was a good way to lead into a presentation of our mission work in Brazil, Mexico, India and Africa.

* * * * *

If there is a college or university near your church, you have a ready resource of learning about other countries. Most foreign students are eager to share about their home country. You will need to get acquainted with them to see if they are able to be a presenter or man a booth. At the very least, they can provide information about their country and its culture and recipes if you want to include food in your fair. They may also loan you objects from their country for a display such as maps, money, pictures, crafts, etc.

If the persons you contact are not Christian, you have an opportunity to share your faith, too. There will be a natural opening as you plan with them, but invite them to your home several times and pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance before you give the full Gospel message. Put yourself in their place and think how you would accept the message of Islam or Buddha if you were studying in their land.

Some of the students will be Christian, so then you can have them share about that as well as their nation and culture.

Truly, there are a surprising number of foreign students and immigrants in America. Be alert to the possibilities in your community.

IDEAS FOR **MISSIONS AWARENESS**

(submitted by Cheryl Aakre, Stephen, MN)

In our Sunday School, we would take the last Sunday of each month during our opening exercises to focus on one of our missionary families. We would try to find out as much as we could about the area/country they were living and serving the Lord in and the work they were involved in. We had a world map to show where they lived from where we lived. We would use pictures from National Geographic or other sources to show how different their houses or cities might look. We would try to have communication with the family that was being featured to share what was happening in their ministry and with their family. We would close the short time with prayer for them and any prayer concerns the missionaries had shared with us.

Another year, we decided to focus one entire month of Sunday school class hours on missions in the AFLC. Our Sunday School Superintendent asked each of the High School classes and their teacher to research one missionary family in advance. They were to make a presentation on a designated Sunday. We featured one country per Sunday. (So when Brazil was featured, each of the missionary families working in Brazil and their work was highlighted.) Each class was given the addresses and email addresses of their missionary family and was told to “be creative.”

The first Sunday opened with a member who was a former missionary-child (raised in another country with missionary parents) asking the children if they knew what a missionary was. She dressed in a style from the country she grew up in, carrying a Bible and hymnbook from that country – pretending she was going to hear the missionary speak in her hometown that Sunday. (She had brought some artifacts from her country to share for the children to see and touch.) She shared about how God calls some to “go into all the world” and share the good news. She also shared some of what growing up in another country/culture was like.

Each Sunday, a world map was set up in the front of the sanctuary, and the class would show where their family lived and worked. Most classes shared some information about the country itself (type of climate, agricultural products grown or types of major industry, major religions, etc.), Each class had a picture of the missionary family they were sharing about. Letters/parts of letters were read from the missionary families. One class had received some information from their family about the work that was going on and they decided to present it in skit form. Each student played a character (or two) and made it very interesting for the congregation. Each Sunday, there was time allowed for questions and answers.

The last Sunday of the month, our congregation was treated to a few people from our congregation/community who had visited a country on some short-term mission work. They showed a short video they had taken while they were there and brought with them some artifacts from that country. They shared some of their experiences and had a question and answer time, where many questions were asked as to what it was like to be in another country where there is so little materially, what the church was like there, how do you communicate, etc. It was very thought provoking and challenging to our members.

In Memoriam / Honorary Membership

Program

By Kathy Klenner



Theme: Prayer

WELCOME: Welcome honored guests and visitors. Our theme for today is prayer.

What a privilege it is to pray.

“For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you, and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers.” Ephesians 1:15-16

These verses talk about faithfulness and prayer. May the following skit encourage us to be prayer warriors for the furtherance of God’s Kingdom.

SKIT

Characters:

Job Interviewer – Donna

Ladies seeking the job – Angie, Jennifer, Kay

Begin with Angie standing in an area of the room separate from the main scene.

ANGIE:(Holding up the newspapers want ads, deep in thought.) Says aloud as she reads: “Wanted: Prayer Warriors – now that is something I could do.” (She exits.)

Main Scene – a simple table or desk with the interviewer on one side and those being interviewed facing her.

DONNA: Good morning Jennifer, come in and have a seat.

JENNIFER: (Very enthusiastic) Hi, I saw your ad in the paper for someone to pray. I am so excited—I say the Lord’s Prayer every night and like wow it would be so easy. I can’t believe it!!! So how do I get started.

DONNA: Well Jennifer you are certainly enthusiastic but this job does require more than just someone reciting the Lord’s Prayer.

JENNIFER: (in disbelief) It does?

DONNA: We are looking for someone who desires to pray for others by name.

JENNIFER: I heard the pastor talk about that in his sermon – I guess I better listen more carefully.

DONNA: Thanks for stopping by Jennifer.

JENNIFER: Thank you. Bye (Jennifer exits and Kay enters)

DONNA: Good morning Kay, come in and have a seat.

KAY: Thanks, Good morning.

DONNA: You are here in response to our want ad looking for people to lift up others in prayer?

KAY: Yes I am. I really enjoy being part of the church prayer chain. It's great to get all that "good information" right away before others hear about it. Most of the ladies downtown at coffee are amazed at how much I find out before them.

DONNA: Kay remember the prayer chain is meant to get the requests out quickly so we can pray specifically for that individual.

KAY: (flustered) Oh yes that's right!

DONNA: Thanks for stopping by Kay.

KAY: Sure – thank you..

(Kay exits and Angie enters)

DONNA: Good morning Angie, come in and have a seat.

ANGIE: Thank you Donna. I was so convicted after I heard the message at Ruth's funeral. She was a true prayer warrior who diligently sought the Lord. Imagine her tattered Bible and her prayer notebook full of all those names of people she prayed for in our congregation. We certainly do need people to step up and pray like she so faithfully did.

DONNA: You're hired.

You may now have a special speaker on prayer and honoring those who have so faithfully served as prayer warriors and in so many other areas of service within the congregation.

OR

If this is an informal gathering you may ask a few WMF women to share how a certain person (one who is receiving the honorary membership pin) has made a spiritual impact on her life. You should include each lady so none are left out – even just as simple as someone sharing her favorite Bible verse on her behalf.

OR

Close with the following devotional that you can use to either honor women or as a memorial service.

They labor well who intercede
For others with a pressing need;
It's on their knees they often work
And from its rigor will not shrink" D. DeHaan

Read Romans 12:10-13

Honorarium

We honor you (insert the names) for so faithfully serving within our congregation and praying for others. It is with great gratitude that we say thank you and present you with the WMF pin. (At this time you may read the significance of the WMF Pin as printed in the Resource Manual, page ____.) (WMF pins can be ordered from the National WMF treasurer.)

In Memoriam

Each day, many older saints, who have continued steadfastly in prayer, leave this earth through death and move on to heaven. This creates a “job opening” for people who will commit themselves to praying faithfully. Many of these positions remain unfilled. Will you fill one of them?

Close in Prayer

Decorations: A bulletin board could be lined with want ad newsprint and a prayer theme placed on top. The tables could have fresh flowers or potted plants placed on a “doily” cut from newsprint. Small “place cards” could be placed by each person with a praying hands sticker and Bible verse on prayer printed on each. A “scrap booker” from your church could start an album of this honorarium/memoriam service and add to it in the years to come.

Honorary Membership

To honor a WMF member for faithful service

Members who have served and continue to serve in WMF may be honored each year. Have ready a WMF pin and honorary certificate, which may be ordered from the National WMF Treasurer. A special table with candles, a corsage or flower are options that enhance the occasion.

“In our local WMF we appreciate the different gifts given to our WMF women. Today we will honor (list names) for their faithful service.

I always thank God for you because of His grace given you in Christ Jesus. I Corinthians 1:4”

Hymn

Read several appropriate Scripture passages. Some suggestions include:

Ruth 2:12; Psalm 92:12-15; Philippians 1:3-6

“God has given us all different gifts so that together we might serve the Lord and accomplish the task of leading souls to Christ. As children of God we each have a special part in the building of the Kingdom. Jesus said, ‘You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last.’ John 15:16

Today we want to thank the Lord for your faithful service, (read names), in ministry to the women of the church. We thank you for your support through the years. You have been an example to us in carrying out the ministry of the WMF to our local church and also in supporting the ministries of the AFLC.

In recognition of your service, we would like to present this certificate and pin making you an honorary member in the National WMF. (Present pin, reading the description and verses printed on the card.) Congratulations and may God bless you.

WMF members have a part in fulfilling the great commission given to believers by the Lord. “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...(Matthew 28:19a).’ May God continue to use you here to do great things in the work of the WMF.”

Prayer

Hymn

“Different ways of serving are given to each of us that we may work the works of Him who sent us. May each of us be faithful in our tasks.”

NOTE: Honorary Membership certificates and pins are available from the National WMF Treasurer. Pins may also be purchased for individual use. Unless designated otherwise, proceeds from the sale of certificates and pins will help support World Missionaries and National Workers.

MEMORIAL SERVICE 1989

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, how we thank you for the opportunity of gathering together in your precious Name to honor You, to fellowship together as sisters in Christ, and to pay our respects to our departed sisters. We thank You for what You did in their lives and because of that they served others. We thank You for allowing them to be a blessing to others. Now we ask that You would instill in each of us a desire to do what You have planned for each of us. Be with us now as we continue our Memorial Service. In Your Name we pray, Amen.

HYMN: “In Heaven Is Joy and Gladness” (Concordia Hymnal #344)
(Why should we mourn when Jesus has promised us joy and gladness in heaven? Let us sing this song joyfully.)

LEADER: As we remember our loved ones let us pay tribute to those who have gone on before us as we hear God’s Word...

READER 1: Psalm 18:1-3; Psalm 19:7-10

LEADER: As we think of the passing of our sisters in Christ let us rejoice in the truth that the Lord is perfect; He is sure, the precepts of the Lord are right; the Lord is pure, He is clean. His ordinances are true. More to be desired are they than gold. Why do we strive for so many earthly things when we know there is something so much better?

READER 2: Psalm 25:10; Psalm 27:1; Psalm 28:6-8

LEADER: We should have no fear about stepping over Heaven’s thresh-hold.

HYMN: “O Happy Day When We Shall Stand” (Concordia #62)

LEADER: God’s promise is that one day we shall join those who have gone on before and be in that heavenly throng.

READER 3: 2 Corinthians 1:3-5

LEADER: We are so thankful we have a merciful God who will and can comfort us in sorrow, in sickness, or whatever the circumstance might be.

READER 4: 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; Romans 15:13

LEADER: Thank you Lord, for the joy and peace in believing. Through You we do have the hope of Eternal Salvation.

READER 5: John 14:1-3

LEADER: Isn’t it going to be nice not to have to worry about preparing our own rooms? We won’t need to wonder what color goes with what. Jesus has it all picked out. Thank you, Jesus.

READER 6: Isaiah 49:13; James 1:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

LEADER: It isn't always easy to give thanks in all circumstances but calling upon the Lord can make it possible.

READER 7: Philippians 4:4-7

LEADER: Our command is to rejoice always so that means even in the going home of a loved one. Jesus doesn't mean we are not to be sad when a loved one goes. He wept when Lazarus died. He gave us tears to vent our sorrow but then after our tears are dried our time of rejoicing begins.

READER 8: Isaiah 49:13

LEADER: It says to sing for joy for the Lord has comforted His people. Let's do that. Let us think about the words as we sing them.

HYMN: "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior" (Concordia #13)

LEADER: Thank you, ladies, for your willingness to take part in this service. I hope you have received a special blessing for doing so.

I would like to close our Memorial Service by reading the words of the Hymn..."Blest Be The Tie That Binds"

Blest be the tie that binds, Our hearts in Christian love
The fellowship of kindred minds, Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne, We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes, our mutual burdens bear,
And often for each other flows – the sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part, It gives us inward pain.
But we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet again.

THE LORD'S PRAYER: All

Mrs. Bud Haugen
Snohomish, Washington

Memorials

A program for remembering former WMF members

It is suggested that at one meeting each year time be set aside for remembering WMF members who died during the previous year. A special table with candle and/or decorations may be used.

Read one or more appropriate Scriptures. The following are suggestions:

I John 2:25; I Peter 1:3, 4; I Corinthians 2:9; Revelation 21:4; Hebrews 4:9

Hymn: (Suggestion) “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less”

“It is our privilege to honor the memory of WMF members who have gone from this life to be with the Lord during this past year. Their faithful service is remembered, as are their testimonies in word, song, leadership and in the church.

(Light candles) Today we remember with gratitude to the Lord (read names). Let us thank the Lord for them as we pray silently.” The leader closes with prayer and/or with the Lord’s Prayer.

Hymn: (Suggestion) “Christ is the Cornerstone”

“As we remember these dear ones, let us also resolve to carry on faithfully the work they left behind. Galatians 2:20 says, ‘I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.’ We have been instructed to ‘...stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain (I Corinthians 15:58).’

Christ has no hands other than ours, no feet but those of His people. We remember today those who were examples to us. May Christ be seen, too, in us. We want to be examples, also, of Jesus’ love, joy and peace. Considering prayerfully, ‘Jesus, what would You have me to do?’ will help us make choices that honor Him. May God bless us, each one, as we go out to serve Him. Amen.”

NOTE: Faithful women and loved ones may be remembered with special gifts that should be mailed to the National WMF Treasurer. These gifts are used to help support pastors and national workers who are proclaiming the Gospel on our mission fields unless otherwise designated.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

OPENING SCRIPTURE: “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.”
Psalm 116:15

PRAYER

REMARKS:

The flowers before you are in memory of faithful Christian women who have left this earthly life and have gone home to be with the Lord.

As we gather together today, it is fitting that we pause to praise and thank God for each Christian woman who has put her trust in God and who willingly served Him as a faithful servant. We do mourn for them. We are also grateful to God for their various ways of service, whether it has been, according to Romans 12:6-8, in teaching, encouraging, serving, prophesying, giving, leading, or showing mercy. As we remember them and their gifts we can be reminded of the brevity of life and our need to be fully surrendered to the Lord. Scripture records women who faithfully served the Lord. May we also be diligent in our walk with Jesus and allow Him to rule our thoughts and actions so that we may truly glorify Him.

As each (District) name is read, I will ask that you reflect on the memory of departed loved ones that you individually have known, and silently thank and praise God for their lives here on earth.

“And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign forever and ever.” Revelation 22:5

CLOSING PRAYER:

HYMN SUGGESTION: “Children of the Heavenly Father”

Mrs. Burton Boyum
Kenyon, Minnesota

IN MEMORIAM SERVICE 1992

“For this God is our God forever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death” (Psalm 48:14)

Dear friends in Christ, as we gather this day to praise and thank the Lord for those dear ladies who so faithfully served Him in our WMF and this past year have gone home to be with Him in Heaven, let us bow our hearts to Him in prayer.

PRAYER: Father, how grateful we are for the dear ones from our midst who are now at rest from their labors of love in our WMF and are now among family and friends in Heaven. We thank you for their Christian witness, for their courage as they faced the last trial of this earthly life, knowing you were waiting to take their outstretched hands and lead them into a blissful eternity. They have been an inspiring example to us of your power and grace within, to carry us through the dark shadows. Blessed be their memory. We thank you and praise you, Dear God, for your amazing grace. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

SONG: “What a Joy to Reach the Harbor” Concordia #330.

There are flowers placed here in memory of those who served so faithfully in our WMF. In their dedication and untiring service they were a beautiful example for us to follow wherever God calls us.

Will the representatives please come forward and place a flower in the vase in memory of the dear ladies from your local/district WMF who are now at home with the Lord. (The name(s) of the deceased may be given as the flower is placed in the vase.) Please remain standing until they are all recognized. Thank you.

If I have omitted anyone, please come forward at this time, also.

As we close our service, let us remember the words of Jesus:

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:1-3).

Praise His Name.

Ladies, please be seated. Thank you.

SONG: “Face to Face” (solo) or Children of the Heavenly Father” (solo or congregation)

Let us all stand and close by repeating the Twenty-Third Psalm.

Faye James
Medicine Lake Lutheran
Minneapolis, Minnesota

CREATING A WOMEN'S GATHERING

1. Our Creator God made us to be creative like Him. We have the Holy Spirit to inspire us from His Word, so BE CREATIVE!!! STRETCH your mind!!
2. Choose a Bible verse. Focus on what keywords in the verse could be used as a concept to expand into the items listed on the sheet that will help organize a women's fun activity/event. Here are some examples:

O Taste and see that the Lord is Good. The Grafton WMF went on the word "taste" with a coffee party; "A Latte Fun" had a coffee and chocolate bar with many different selections. Coffee jelly beans as table favors, coffee door prizes, and a coffee bean decorated frame of the theme verse. A Program with fun music then led to more spiritual music and a speaker on the theme. The goal was to invite new neighbor ladies and friends for outreach and fellowship.

Use to help you create your own women's gathering:

Select a Setting: from your theme verse

Select an Activity: from your theme verse

Select your spiritual goal from your event:

Below are some verses and activities that the 2011 WMF Leadership Breakfast came up with to help you in your creative plans:

- A. Psalm 127:1 "Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain."
- B. Psalm 119: 103 "How sweet are Your words to my taste."
- C. Psalm 89:15 "Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim You, who walk in the light of Your Presence, O Lord."
- D. Psalm 33:12 "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people He chose for His inheritance."
- E. Hebrews 12: 1 b "--let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."
- F. Psalm 89:1 "I will sing of the Lord's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations."
- G. II Peter 3:18 a "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."
- H. I Thessalonians 4:18 "Therefore encourage each other with these words."
- I. Hebrews 10:23-25 "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encourage one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near."

Worksheet following this page to help you work up your special gathering.

CREATE A WOMEN'S GATHERING

VERSE:

SETTING:

ACTIVITIES:

SPIRITUAL GROWTH:

LEARNING OPPORTUNITY:

OTHER:

PROGRAM IDEAS FOR WOMEN'S MINISTRY

(The ideas below are only IDEAS to get your creative juices flowing. Please feel free to use the idea as is OR make adjustments to the idea just for your own group. You know the ladies in your congregation and community best, so whatever you can do to minister to them in a creative, fun way is GOOD!)

The ideas below have been shared by several women from various churches in the AFLC. Feel free to use them or take those ideas and expand into other areas as you see fit.

1. Using our resources – could have demonstrations or a speaker present ideas on using our resources well – buying, preparation and use of food.
 - a. Food preservation (canning, freezing, and drying of foods) can be demonstrated by someone.
 - b. Bread baking
 - c. Making fruit preserves
2. Pot Gardening – If someone lives in an apartment or condominium, they might enjoy having some fresh vegetables they can grow in the “pot garden”. Or if you are limited by mobility, pot gardening might be something you can do to enjoy fresh vegetables that are your favorites. Someone from a garden store, or someone you know with experience in this area, could be the presenter.
3. Demonstration with flowers – getting the maximum out of the minimum whether using garden varieties or from a florist. You could certainly ask a florist to do this demonstration but maybe there is a lady in your community who is just really good at flower arranging who could help you out here.
4. Summer (or any season) food demonstration. Someone could prepare, in a demonstration format, a special seasonal dish. Of course there would be “tastes” of it for each person attending.
5. Craft ideas – there may be many ladies in your community who are crafters. They could demonstrate a craft and maybe even lead a series of classes on certain types of crafts like knitting, crocheting, quilting, beading, scrapbooking, etc. Maybe you could have a craft night each week (for about 6 weeks?) and several people could demonstrate a certain craft. Good fellowship and mentoring opportunities can happen when we do that.
6. Have someone demonstrate remodeling clothes that are not worn out but that could be used by someone else if they were updated.

MORE WAYS TO MINISTER TO WOMEN:

7. Have a get together once a month where women will share a devotional that has spoken to them during that month. This might help encourage them to be in the Word and also to share their blessings and be an encouragement to others.
8. Special Events:
 - a. Mother’s Day Tea or luncheon
 - b. Christmas Tea
 - c. Picnic on a patio or picnic in the park (Hold your regular women’s meeting in the park and have a picnic potluck lunch).
 - d. An outing to a historical place in your area – spend time thinking about your heritage – especially your Christian heritage and how it has affected your life.
 - e. District WMF rallies – be sure your women know about and are encouraged to attend the rallies that your district has. You will get to know other women from other churches and you will also have opportunity to fellowship with women from your own church.
 - f. WMF Day at the Annual conference of the AFLC. Be sure to encourage the women from your church to attend the WMF Day. The annual conference has been called the great “family reunion” of the AFLC. The WMF Day, which is held the day before the annual conference, can be called the Women’s reunion! It is opportunity for people to get to make new friends and

renew old friendships. If all of you cannot go, can you pay for your president to go to WMF Day?

I'm sure many of you have many ideas that you can use to minister to women – both from your congregation and those outside your congregation. Whatever “fun” event you choose to plan, always include a devotional which will point you and those in attendance to Jesus. That is the purpose for which we live.

Meetings for the Seasons

EARLY WINTER

Christmas Event – TOYS OF JOY UNDER THE TREE

At your ladies Christmas party, consider asking each lady to bring a toy from a provided list to replenish the church's nursery or preschool department. The centerpieces at the table could be miniature Christmas trees with miniature gifts or toys under them (these can also act as door prizes). Have a large tree for women to put their toys under. Have a woman from your church share how a tree is a picture of our walk with Christ. For favors, consider giving each woman a wooden cutout Christmas tree.

LATE WINTER

Extreme Make-over

Spring is just around the corner and many women are concerned about making their bodies more presentable for the summer months when many wear shorts or capris and short-sleeved tops. Why not plan an Extreme Make-Over program – to “make-over” our spiritual lives as well?

Plan workshops similar to the following topics and ask the women to move from space to space around your church and learn about these various areas of their personal lives:

- **Make over your quiet time:** How to have an effective personal Bible study time. Resources in preparation for the leader may be How to study the Bible by Kay Arthur or How to study the Bible for Yourself by Tim LaHaye.
- **Make over your prayer time:** Experiencing God's presence. A great resource for this would be Invitation to Solitude and Silence: Experiencing God's Transforming Presence by Ruth Haley Barton.
- **Make over your Pocketbook:** God's plan for your finances. A possible resource could be Personal Finances by Larry Burkett

I'm sure you can think of many “MAKE OVER” women's issues where it would be good to speak truth in a workshop setting.

This program idea also gives women in your WMF the opportunity to enlarge their gift for public speaking.

SPRING/ EARLY SUMMER

Garden Party: Sowing Seeds of Faith Tea

Plan a Tea based on Matthew 13, the parable of the sower. Recruit one of your women or ask an outside speaker to share about how our walk with Christ is represented by the parable. Consider having a woman read the story, “The Trellis and the Vine,” that tells the story of a tiny seed growing into what God had planned for its life.

Base your decorations on a garden theme. Set the buffet table with gardening décor, burlap covering the tables, clay pots, stepping stones to set the food on, new, clean watering cans for the beverage, etc. Each table can have a clay stepping stone with a potted flower and tea lights as the centerpiece. Door prizes can be gardening items. Each woman can receive a packet of flower seeds. Consider serving open-faced cucumber sandwiches (or another vegetable sandwich) fresh fruit, cookies, and more than one flavor of tea.

Consider selling two tickets for the price of one, so the women can invite a friend, coworker, neighbor, etc. Also, consider having a table where the women can sign up for various church ministries that need laborers in the field! Planting and harvesting a garden takes labor and so do the various ministries in the church of Jesus Christ!

FALL

A Slice of Heaven

Featuring hot apple pie and espresso. Decorate everything in Fall leaves and apples. Print the programs in the shape of an apple. Decorate the tables with red table cloths and fall leaves with a whole apple pie at the center of each table.

Can small jars of applesauce for each woman to take home with her. Attach an apple shaped tag with the scripture from Psalm 17:8, “Keep me as the apple of your eye. Hide me in the shadow of your wings.”

Have a speaker who will encourage the women sharing by sharing about the fruits of the Spirit; or bearing fruit for the Kingdom by someone leading a Bible study on Matthew 25:14 – 30 – using our gifts; or John 15:1-17 – the vine and branches.

Bountiful Blessings – A Night of Praise

Plan a women’s dinner that is focused on the blessings and praises that we receive from God. Decorate each table with cornucopias and all the fall trimmings! After the meal, have the leader focus the women’s attention on the word PRAISE. Consider choosing 6 women from the church to represent a letter from the word PRAISE. Give each of the 6 women the question, WHY DO I PRAISE GOD? And assign one letter to each woman. The first word in their answer should begin with the letter assigned to them. Such as:

- P – Praise God for my Provisions (home, finances, job, other material things.)
- R – Relationships (family, friends, neighbors, church.)
- A – Abilities (all that God has equipped me to do.)
- I – Identity in Christ (I am His child.)
- S – Savior (From the beginning of time, God planned for the sacrifice of His Son to redeem me.)
- E – Eternal life – living eternally committed to Him, both here on this earth and in heaven forevermore.)

Have each woman expound on their answer for 3 – 5 minutes.

More Program Ideas for special Women’s Ministry programs

Submitted by Carol Hensrud, Bethel FLC, Grafton, ND

SPRING TEA: “Growing in the Garden of God”

Plan a tea with the theme “Gardening God’s Way” based on John 15 – the vine and the branches. “I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener” and Gen 2:8 “Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east.” Could promote it as a “Mother-Daughter” event, with all ages taking part. Recruit one or two of your own women to share their expertise on gardening, and relate it to our spiritual life – preparing the soil, planting, weeding, pruning, harvesting. First have the speaker giving a devotional based on Scriptures listed above; then demonstrate how to plant a patio flower pot. Discuss soil, fertilizer, types of flowers, etc. Take questions from the group. When the pot has been planted, have a drawing to see who gets to take it home! You may wish to include other door prizes for young girls to grandmas!

Decorate the tables with potted geraniums, china cups and saucers, bright spring-colored napkins, and individual petit-fours. A traditional English Tea menu of cucumber sandwiches, ribbon sandwiches, strawberries dipped in chocolate, and a small cookie may be served.

Musicals selections for the program may include the hymn, “Thy Word is Like a Garden, Lord” and/or the piano duet entitled “Tea for Two.”

Invitations can be sent/given to all the women of the church encouraging them to come and bring a friend. Tickets could be sold two for the price of one.

Yawn! A Board Party

*Invitation taken from the book “Creative Hospitality” by Marlene D. LeFever.

Invitation:

“Come on and be ‘board’ with us”

We’re planning an evening of good, old-fashioned board games.

Come and meet our church “at play”.

When: _____

Where: _____

Food Sure! We’re making “whatever soup”

We’ll have the stock simmering and you

Bring something to add to the stock. The soup will

Be what you make it.

Or, bring something to add to the lettuce.

We promise you won’t be bored!

Various Program Idea Starters

Determine your focus as a WMF. The number one focus should be Christ and the relationship of your ladies to Him. Bible study is the way to begin. The other programs, projects will grow from that. If you do nothing else in your church begin with Bible study and prayer. As the ladies grow in their relationship with the Lord encourage unity with the group by involving them all in various programs and opportunities.

Is there a Senior complex in your area. Check out to see if there would be any interest in a Bible study held there. Publicize the study, time and location. If possible your ladies could contribute a snack or coffee favor for after or during the study.

Do you have young mothers to offer a Bible study time for? Get some women together and offer babysitting so the mothers can fully focus on God's Word.

How about a prayer breakfast? Have the ladies gather around breakfast and then close with a time of prayer

How can you reach the children of your community? Can you have a monthly (or how ever often you deem you can handle in your schedule) Kids club. It is easy to work with if you get VBS material to use as your base.

Are there organizations either locally or nationally that you could provide things for such as: Food pantry needing helpers or food to stock their shelves. Quilts for the homeless shelters. We also have our mission organizations that can use your help. The cost of postage to ship overseas is high but it is well worth it at the mission. Brazil has the Miriam Home, which can use several different supplies. Alaska has need of quilts to hand out as well as cookie mixes when The Net is open in the spring.

Is your group interested in a cookbook? Pulling together recipes and organizing them and then publishing them into a book and handing out or selling them to raise funds for missions or a missions project.

How about a craft night? To create crafts, cards, etc. for the church or personally. Time spent together creating things. Maybe making new Christmas ornaments for the trees at church.

How about hosting activities that can help the community out such as, blood drives, financial seminars, Veterans' Day celebrations, etc?

Congregational gatherings to build fellowship and unity in your church might be, Valentine's Day, Easter Breakfast, Fun supper (Mystery Supper), Fall supper, Christmas Dinner.

Practice a Jesus heart, be available. Always be willing and able to help with whatever is needed, no matter how last minute.

Is there a Prison ministry or a women's shelter that you could make hand-made cards to give to women in prison so they can use them to write loved ones. We've collected stationery, pens and stamps to send to women in prison as well. We've also had blanket parties where we do the fleece tied blankets and bring them to battered women's shelters so that children that are brought in have something they can keep and comfort them. Take some time to pray for those who will be receiving the gifts that you present to them.

Anyone interested in ministry to women could be involved in planning activities. Ladies with special talents could be asked to do demonstrations on the things they do. Gatherings can be planned that would encourage the ladies in various ways. Here are a few suggestions but don't be limited to just these:

- Setting up a mentoring program matching mature ladies with a younger one with the idea of mutual teaching?
- How about a quilting group that gathers to make quilts for missions or community needs?
- A card making group to make cards that can be given to prison ministry or women's shelters?
- A sewing group could make toys and/or simple clothing for missions or women's shelters, depending on the needs expressed by these missions?
- You could also have a visitation ministry for the elderly and/or shut-ins in your congregation to show the love of Christ.
- How about a Young Mother's study, a Girls Night Out, or a Women's Retreat (one day or a full weekend)?

What other ideas could you come up with that would minister to your ladies? You can always ask the ladies what they are interested in. There is also the opportunity to get involved through the Samaritan Shoe Boxes and Christmas Tree Ministries (take a need off of an ornament hung on a tree) or other legitimate organizations.

Ecclesiastes Program Ideas

When planning your WMF activity calendar for the year, please consider using all or some of the following ideas from Ecclesiastes:

A time to be born: Presenting newborns with Cradle Roll Packets.

A time to die: Serving a light lunch or meal at funerals.

A time to plant: Planting flowers on the church property or nursing home.

A time to heal: Honoring those who have served in the military.

A time to tear down: Visiting shut-ins.

A time to build: Partnering those in your congregation 18 years old and younger with an adult who will pray for and spend time with them.

A time to weep: Abortion. Be informed and inform on National or State issues that Christians should be aware of that could influence politicians to vote according to God's laws.

A time to laugh: A gathering to share a video from Ken Davis or other Christian comedian. Popcorn could be served and entire families could be invited.

A time to mourn: Visit with those who have lost loved ones and support them however needed.

A time to gather stones: Raking leaves in the church lawn and other collaborative efforts.

A time to gather them: Prepare a list of needs for the kitchen with a sign-up sheet for individuals to purchase.

A time to embrace: We had a head usher who insisted on hugging everyone. It took a while to get used to, but when he moved, we all miss this sincere gesture.

A time to search: Searching for verses to comfort a person going through a particularly hard time.

A time to throw away: Purging the church kitchen and storage areas.

A time to mend: Making quilts.

A time to love: Host a Valentine's dinner honoring couples who have been married 50 years and more.

DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE

There is a movement of prayer sweeping across the land that could be the prelude to a season of spiritual awakening. This suggested service may be used for a format for women of the AFLC to join in united prayer on at least one dedicated occasion.

The following is one model for an hour of prayer:

1. PRELUDE (10 minutes)

Scripture – Psalm 138, 146, 148 or 150

Worship in Song – Choose a hymn like “We Praise Thee, O God,” or a couple of praise choruses, that addresses the Lord personally.

Prayer – for Himself, Who He is and what He has done.

2. PREPARATION (15 minutes)

Scripture – Psalm 51:1-17

Prayer – Searching the heart, confession of sins and personal revival.

3. PETITION (20 minutes)

Scripture – Matthew 7:7-11

The Lord’s Prayer

Worship in Song – “Sweet Hour of Prayer” or another favorite prayer hymn.

Prayer – specific requests

- World evangelization
- Our nation
- Our local congregation and the AFLC
- Personal ministries

4. POSTLUDE (15 minutes)

Scripture – Psalm 100, Philippians 4:4-7

Worship in Song – “Thanks to God” or another hymn that expresses our gratitude to the Lord.

Prayer – thanksgiving

- For answered prayer
- For the family of God
- For the work of God around the world

NOTE: Involve as many women as possible...a leader, Scripture readers, etc. You may decide to open each section of the service for free prayer or to assign certain individuals for specific prayer topics. A combination approach is also possible, with at least one person prepared in advance for each section plus opening the time for free prayer by any who want to participate. Finally, try to follow the time divisions as carefully as possible so that you are finished in one hour. Remember most of all that a Day of Prayer should not just be another program but a step in the process of pressing on from where we are now to where God wants us to be, from what we are now to what God wants us to become.

PRAYER PARTNERS

By Lori Willard

GIRLFRIENDS UNITE!

Here are few ways that you can encourage prayer amongst the ladies in your church:



At the Altar – Our congregation was blessed when God called two men from our church into ministry. My heart was burdened for those men and their families! Our church family had a responsibility to pray for them during those years! Our pastor’s wife agreed with me because she also had a strong sense to begin a regular prayer time at the church. Together, we met at the altar every Saturday morning with no agenda and no prayer list – just seeking God’s heart – what He wanted us to pray about. As we were quiet for several minutes, the Lord directed our prayer time as our petitions went back and forth between us. Although we verbally announced the prayer time to other women, we had few others attend. Some would come for a short season and not return. Others would come only once. The amount of people did not seem to matter. God made it clear that He wanted us to be consistent as He showed us answers to prayer during that very first week and beyond! God is so gracious to us! If we will humbly answer His call to pray, He will work in and through us! Sometimes the Lord would make US the answer to our prayers! Even though I have moved and am not able to attend that church anymore, guess who I call on when I KNOW I need someone who will PRAY?!

Walking – Women love to walk for exercise! Why not incorporate prayer into your times of walking?! You can walk in good weather or bad. Outdoors can provide wonderful fresh air and sunrises. Inside your church can provide a warm, dry spot for those stormy or rainy days. Regardless, grab a walking partner and start praying as you stroll together.

Coffee/Tea Time – Invite a girlfriend or two who would love to come to your house and pray.

Sitting in Traffic – We do that a lot where I come from! How about taking the time to pray with those in the car? Alone? How about praying by yourself? Make the most of the time given to us.

As the Lord provides us grace, we are to be: united, joyful, in prayer, focusing on the Word, and sensitive to others’ needs – we, quite possibly, may be the answer to their need – according to Philippians 4. What better way to unite together, as sisters, than in and through prayer?!

Hebrews 10:24-25 NKJV

“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”



Christmas Gathering Meeting

By Barb Strand

As many of you know, there are 11 Bible lessons in our Bible study book, so in our local WMF, we use December for our Christmas gathering (party). One member usually volunteers to host the Christmas event, and it is an excellent opportunity to invite women of the congregation that don't usually attend the WMF meeting and others in the community to come and join the Christmas festivities, and celebrate our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Often times we have mothers, sisters, special friends, and others that are included in the gathering.

Everyone who wishes brings a dish to share...often their Christmas baking specialty, special dips or sauces, or a new recipe they are anxiously waiting to try out...there is usually an abundance of food. We have started to bring recipes to share too...especially if it is something new we have tried.

Also we bring something to share...a reading, a portion of scripture that has spoken to us during the Christmas season, or sing a favorite Christmas carol, or maybe a prayer request. Maybe the words of a Christmas hymn have spoken to you during the advent season, and what a wonderful time to be able to share with a body of believers...all women.



For Members In Retirement Homes Or Nursing Homes

By Barb Strand

Keep in touch with the member of your WMF...good way to include these ladies is to make sure they receive the Bible study, so they can be doing it at the same time your local WMF does.

Have an officer or friend of the member in a facility contact the WMF member in the facility and see if she would like to host a monthly WMF meeting.

- They may be able to secure a room for the meeting if given enough lead time.
- Allow the hostess to pick the date and time for the meeting in her new facility.
- Offer to have other members bring the lunch, but allow the hostess to do so if she wishes.
- Be sure and announce the change in venue for the monthly meeting – maybe a couple of months ahead so members can make arrangements to attend.

Make a valid attempt to attend the WMF meeting of the member in the facility.

Allow enough time to see the new home of the member.

Be sure to pray for the member in a new setting.

Send minutes of the monthly business meeting to members if they desire.

TEA PARTY

Karen Sletten, Bethel Lutheran W.M.F

Our minister's wife had a "Tea Party" for an elderly member who will soon be leaving for an assisted living home. She made it seem as old fashioned as possible. The tables were covered with yellow, brown and green plastic tablecloths, down the center was old beautiful cream pitchers-- fine china ones. Each place setting had quaint dainty napkins with a spoon and fork. Each place setting had a beautiful (and fragile) cup and saucer. Many of us had brought our best ones from home so each setting was unique.

The food was served from a serving table and the tea, coffee, punch and lemonade were served at their tables. This way they only had to carry the plate and the tea cups and saucers stayed at the table so there was no worry of dropping or spilling of the fragile borrowed china. The hot water for tea was in a big olden teapot that came from Holland some years ago. This was on display but tea was served at the table for those who wanted it.

The program (while everyone was sitting down) consisted of a devotional, a solo, and some poems-Helen Steiner Rice type. Since the honoree was a retired teacher and several former students were in attendance, they gave interesting stories about their remembrance of being in the third grade room with her as their teacher.

The afternoon was delightful!!! Many of our younger gals had never actually been to a real Tea Party.



GROWING YOUR GROUP

By Lynn Wellumson

I wish there were five steps to building numbers in your local WMF group. There is no magical formula that works in any group, let alone every group.

Obviously, and foremost, make it a matter of prayer. Pray that God would lay it on women's hearts a desire to be involved in mission work at home and abroad. Pray that Biblically sound AFLC printed materials would be a desire that lay on their hearts.

Every WMF group has to evaluate and determine the best time and date for the ladies involved in their church. Whether it is morning, afternoon, or evening, be careful of the time. Meetings that seem to have no purpose or drone on are a drain on everyone.

With God's help, make your group a safe place to discuss hardships or heartaches. Burdens shared and genuine empathy are so helpful and we fulfill scripture concerning bearing one another's burdens.

Perhaps, someone could be hired from the community to babysit young children while moms attend WMF. Is there a community service project your area needs?

One idea is for each woman involved in a local WMF to be a friend/mentor to a fellow church attendee. This involves praying for, encouraging, and urging participation at the local WMF level. If every member that currently attends the local WMF meeting could encourage and invite one other woman, that would be 100% growth. PRAY, first and foremost, that God would lay on that person's heart a desire to see His kingdom furthered and allow them to be a part of that process.



GIGGLES Girls Group

By Chanyce Dahl

WMF is a special and unique aspect of the AFLC. It exists to minister to women, support missionaries and serve others. The opportunities for positively impacting your local church, community and the world are endless. As we consider the command to “Go into all the world and make disciples of all nations.” Mark 16:15a, it makes one wonder if the women of our AFLC are fully embracing the simplicity of WMF in order to do our part.

As our Evening WMF attendance numbers began to decline, we prayed for a solution to why women were not compelled to be a part of such an integral part of the church. The Lord put the idea of GIGGLES on my heart.

GIGGLES stands for Growing In God through Games, Lessons, Experience and Service. This is a junior WMF program aimed to mentor the next generation. Girls ages eight to twelve are invited to attend our monthly WMF meeting. We encourage their moms to attend as well. We want to give them a taste of the fellowship and the ministry opportunities along with the joy that comes with being an active member of the church body.

During our WMF Bible Study, the GIGGLES girls have their own Bible study led by one of the moms or a high school mentor. They attend and take part in our business meeting. Other things that they do throughout the year are lessons received from women in our church such as baking, embroidery, card making, etc. We also encourage them to take part in service projects such as missionary cards, shopping for Christmas gifts for Angel Tree, Christmas caroling to our elderly in the church and serving on Sunday mornings during coffee hour.

The young girls are so enthusiastic and want to learn and serve. They breathed life into our WMF group and blessed so many through their service. Hopefully their experiences and knowledge gained through their time involved with WMF make a lasting impact in their walk with the Lord and their desire to be active members of WMF one day.

Joseph – A Tender Portrait at Christmastime

By Amy Engwall

Have you ever felt like your life has been unremarkably ordinary and dotted with failure? Then take heart, dear one, for you are in good company. Scripture paints a beautiful portrait of an extraordinary man named Joseph who probably did not see himself as anything particularly special. He was born into a family in Israel at a time of spiritual drought; a virtual silence from God that had lasted four hundred years. Joseph would have the privilege of witnessing God shatter His silence. God was preparing to send His only begotten Son in the form of a helpless babe to be light in the darkness, the hope of salvation to a lost and dying world. In his wildest dreams Joseph would never have imagined himself in the epi-center of this fulfillment of prophecy. As God unfolded His will in His high and mysterious ways, He included Joseph, a simple laborer and crafter of wood. While at times uncontrollable circumstances must have made Joseph feel like a complete failure, God chose him because of something he did have control over - his faith and his character.

In Matthew 1:18-19 we see Joseph's humility.

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her, desired to put her away secretly."

These verses tell us that Mary and Joseph were betrothed. In those days a betrothal was like an engagement period, but it was legally binding. A betrothal could be broken only by a legal transaction, much like a divorce. The betrothal lasted about twelve months and during that time the groom would busy himself preparing a home for his bride which was typically attached to his family's home. The bride and her family were busy preparing wedding clothing. When the father of the bridegroom determined the newlyweds' home was finished and the time was right, he would look at his son and say, "Go and get your bride."

It was during this time of great anticipation, preparation, and hope for the future that Mary was found to be with child. Can you imagine how devastating this news would have been to Joseph? He knew he wasn't the father of the child. What an embarrassing and humiliating turn of events! Joseph surely would have initially felt betrayed. But Matthew tells us that Joseph was a righteous man. Matthew also indicates that Joseph was a very humble man. Humility is the grace to not think of ourselves more highly than we ought to, but to honor others above ourselves. A betrothal could be terminated on the grounds of adultery and the punishment was sometimes death by stoning. Matthew 1:19 gives us a glimpse into the tenderness of Joseph's heart when it reveals that he planned to send Mary away secretly. No revenge, no spite, just kind humility – a reflection of the character God looked for in the man who was to be the earthly father of Jesus.

While Joseph didn't initially embrace Mary's pregnancy claim that 'the Holy Spirit did it', God didn't leave Joseph to wonder for long if Mary was the most imaginative storyteller on the planet. God sent a special angelic messenger to Joseph to confirm Mary's outlandish explanation.

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"But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins." Matthew 1:20 – 21

The angel was intentional in assuring Joseph's upcoming role as Jesus' earthly father by

telling him that he would name the child, a distinct honor reserved for the father.

We get another confirmation of Joseph's humility as the story continues in Matthew 1:24-25.

“And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took her as his wife, and kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.”

Obedience, humility, and patience walk side by side. Joseph immediately followed through with what the angel of the Lord commanded. He took Mary as his wife. He didn't demand his rights as a husband but protected Mary and kept her a virgin until she gave birth to Jesus.

If a mere human had written this story, it is at this point that the highly favored couple would become famous, pampered and protected from all earthly hardship. God, in His infinite wisdom, orchestrated a much different turn of events.

In Luke 2:4-7 we see the Joseph's humanness.

“And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, in order to register, along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was with child. And it came about that while they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”

Joseph had no control over the political decisions of his day. He had no special authority, no world-wide clout. He was helpless to change the situation when Caesar Augustus decided to take a census of the whole inhabited world. He was forced to travel nearly eighty miles to Bethlehem with his very pregnant wife. If Joseph and Mary traveled with a caravan and Mary rode on a donkey (which the Bible never verifies) then the journey probably took four days. Ladies, can you imagine being almost nine months pregnant riding a donkey twenty miles a day for four days straight? We can expect that upon arrival Joseph hustled to the “Bethlehem Inn” to claim the room that God had surely mercifully and miraculously reserved for them. As Mary's warning of “the contractions are coming harder and faster” rang in his ears, the cold, uncaring pronouncement of “NO VACANCY” from the innkeeper must have hit Joseph like a kick to the stomach. The Bible has already assured us of Joseph's care and protection for Mary. How he must have agonized over not being able to find a suitable place to stay. It was obvious that the baby's birth was imminent. So, they found shelter in what surely was the stable carved out of rock in the Bethlehem hillside housing the spotless, unblemished lambs that were to be taken to Jerusalem and sacrificed for the sins of the people. What must have been going through Joseph's mind? Perhaps something like this,

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“God trusted me to take care of the woman who is carrying the Savior of the world and I have failed. Horribly! Completely! Epicly!” Joseph was powerless to provide Mary with even basic essentials like a bed or even her mother. Instead, they were surrounded by smelly animals. How could he have known that this stable was the perfect place for the Lamb of God to be born? It must have hurt Joseph, the skilled carpenter, to lay this precious newborn baby boy, the Son of God, not in a cradle lovingly made by his own hands, but in a dirty feeding trough. Nothing was going the way Joseph had hoped, yet all of heaven knew God's plan was playing out perfectly. While Joseph was berating himself for this “epic fail” God was

writing a breathtakingly beautiful script that humanity would embrace and celebrate into all of eternity. Sometimes God uses us most remarkably when we feel like we are failing most miserably.

In Matthew 13:54-55a we see Joseph's honorability.

“And coming to His home town Jesus began teaching them in their synagogue, so that they became astonished, and said, “Where did this man get this wisdom, and these miraculous powers? Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not His mother called Mary.....”

Joseph honored Jesus by raising Him as if He was his own. All of Nazareth recognized Jesus as the son of Joseph the carpenter, even years after Jesus was grown. Even though Jesus did not share one drop of blood with Joseph, it is Joseph's genealogy that is recorded in Matthew 1. Both Mary and Joseph descended from David but it is Joseph who descended from David's son Solomon while Mary was descended from David's son, Nathan. The right to royalty came through Solomon who was David's heir to the throne. So, it is through Joseph's adoption of Jesus that He was granted the legal right to be the King of the Jews. If Jesus had been the son of Mary without her being the legal wife of Joseph, His royal claim would have been rejected. As the virgin-born son of Mary, Jesus had no legal right to the throne. As the adopted son of Joseph He had every right. Joseph would be lost to history if his greatest accomplishment had not been that of stepdad to Jesus, our Messiah.

A look at the life of Joseph gives us hope that God treasures those who are obedient to Him, and He will use those who trust in Him even if circumstances seem to indicate differently. The few verses that give us insight into the character of Joseph reveal a man with a heart full of love, integrity, and tenderness. This Christmas season when you see a nativity scene, notice Mary's humble husband by the manger looking down in wonder and experience with him the miracle of being invited to embrace Emmanuel, God with us.

For a beautiful and poignant addition to this talk, you can play by audio or video “Joseph’s Song” by Michael Card found on YouTube.

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Our Church's WMF Journey

Sent in by Betsy VanMuenster

The WMF ladies' group has been functioning at our church since our church's beginning. According to the WMF records here their opening offering was in January 1988. The group has been faithfully meeting on a monthly basis. Sometimes not very many ladies come and sometimes a lot of ladies come.

A couple of years ago, at our church's annual meeting, the WMF leader and treasurer suggested that the WMF group combine with the quilting/sewing group, due to low attendance at the WMF meetings.

This suggestion was a good one and that's what happened. The two groups combined forces!

Here's how we do it: we gather on the 3rd Saturday of every month, at 9 am for sewing. At 11:30 we stop to have devotions, review of our missionaries and what is currently going on with them, and we end with prayer, always lifting up to God the work of our missionaries and their needs. A donation is collected from this group, (as well as a ladies Bible study group, who also donates to the quilting/WMF group. The church is also very generous to the WMF, giving to us as well). Afterwards we have lunch break then we get back to our sewing!!

We have received many donations of sewing machines, yards and yards of fabric, thread, sewing utensils, etc. We always have a goal in mind, sewing quilts, blankets, bags, etc. to send to our missionaries and their work. So far, we have sent quilts to Brazil at least twice, Alaska, and Mexico. We made 40 book bags for our Kids Club out of donated old jeans and jean material. We are currently making lap quilts for our local nursing home. (One of our quilting/WMF members was temporarily in that nursing home). We make fleece tie blankets for our graduating seniors!! We have many baby blankets that have been made by our group or donated that we are looking for a place to donate to.

On each blanket that we make, we always include God's Word somewhere on that blanket to remind the recipient of our intentions.

When we have a project ready to send off, we present it to the church and our pastor always prays over it. We also, pray for the recipient of each completed blanket, bag, Christmas box, that God would use it and His Word to draw that person to Him. That God would bless this person and their family.

We recently decided to name our quilting/WMF group. During our devotion time we had discussed 2 Timothy 3:1-6. In this scripture, Paul is talking about godlessness in the last days, people who are lovers of themselves, lovers of pleasure, rather than lovers of God, "having a form of godliness, but denying its power." Paul then goes on to say that "they are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women..." We named these women: www (short for weak willed women)! We knew that we didn't want to be one of these www (weak willed women), but instead we wanted to be Women of the Word (WoW)! So, we named our group "WoW."

Our WoW group is such a fun time of fellowship, encouragement, and love and as an added benefit, we have children who join us on occasion. They always brighten our day and help with the work.

We hope this little story of our church's WMF group will be an encouragement to each of you, to continue in your work for the Lord, "because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." 1 Corinthians 1:58

WMF Camp Gathering

By Margie Lee

For the 3rd year, the Western North Dakota/ Eastern Montana family camp included a special WMF gathering. This year's event was hosted by Emmanuel Free Lutheran from Williston, ND. Around 30 ladies, young and old, attended our WMF Lemonade/Coffee.



Everyone received a devotional booklet entitled "Lemonade, when life gives you lemons...." which contained scripture, recipes, craft, and game ideas.



An icebreaker included everyone writing an answer to complete the sentence "When life gives you lemons..."

We also played a game called "Hot Lemon" (similar to hot potato) and passed our "artificial lemon" to music about lemons. When the music abruptly stopped, the gal holding the lemon shared an answer to a "table talk" style question and also won a door prize. All the young ladies who didn't "win", were also given a door prize.

Lime bars, lemon bars, lemon cookies, and CHOCOLATE brownies were served along with coffee and fresh squeezed lemonade. The gathering concluded with Jeanie Sheldon sharing from a book she was reading about a missionary. It was informal, fun, lasted about an hour, and enjoyed by all ages. A Thrivent card was used and that covered all of our expenses. I would recommend other family camps include a special gathering time for your WMF. It is a great opportunity to introduce our young ladies to our faith, fellowship, and service as future WMF members.



IDEAS that WORK

By Mary Pollestad

Let me encourage each women's group to always have one special event that women enjoy and one in which they can invite their friends to come along to. Every woman likes to bring their friends to something just so they can be together. This also enables the Christian gal to bring her non-Christian friend to a non-threatening event in the church. This has really proven to be a wonderful time of outreach. Also, it helps the younger gals to have a special time with their Christian Friends. In this busy world women



don't all have the time to get together. What could be a more wonderful way to get together than at the church around a Christ centered event. It proves to be a wonderful time for all! Always provide childcare for those single gals with children. This way the money issue of a sitter is not a stumbling block to stand in the way for the young mothers. Don't forget the older generation. They enjoy being there too. It is a wonderful time for them to be around the younger gals. Hope this is an idea that you can possibly use and that all can enjoy.

Creative Program Starter Ideas

Ideas gathered at the Sunnyside Free Lutheran Fall Tea September 2021

Theme: John 3:16, "For God so Loved"

Setting: This could be done at church and out into the community.

Activities: gardens/spring or fall

Spiritual Growth: sharing with others

Learning Opportunity: God is love and we should love.

Other:

Theme: John 3:16

Setting: A church or private home.

Activities: Helping others

Spiritual Growth: Bible study.

Learning Opportunity: Emphasis that we are not alone, God is with us.

Other:

Theme: Hebrews 12:1

Setting: A race of running but have the clothing of a woman NOT dressed for running.

Activities: A race of getting "dressed up" and then trying to run with all the material things hindering your performance of "racing."

Spiritual Growth: Not needing material things or image to be the person you can be.

Learning Opportunity: Open your heart and loving who you are, who is with you and putting your faith in God.

Other: Being able to help others by an example of being true.

Theme: 1 Thessalonians 4:8

Setting: At church.

Activities: Use Scripture. Connect -share needs and prayer

Spiritual Growth: Encourage through Scripture and memorizing Scripture.

Learning Opportunity: Through CD's, Radio Broadcast, mixing with people of different cultures.

Other:

Theme: Unto us a child is born – Mary's response to God that needs to be us.

Setting: A Christmas Tea

Activities: Demonstrations of Lefsa making, knitting, other Christmas crafts. Have a giving tree, bring in gifts for Angel tree, nursing home, group home

Spiritual Growth: Use our gifts to share. Keeping the meaning of Christ in Christmas.

Learning Opportunity: Serving, giving, sharing, honoring God.

Other:

Theme: Hebrews 12:1

Setting: Addiction

Activities: Self-Awareness-Finding out if each individual has or is prone to addiction

Spiritual Growth: Living an addiction controlled life.

Learning Opportunity: Find Scriptures that pertaining to addiction and how to turn it over to God. Learning you are not fighting alone

Other:

Theme: Proverbs 19:17-Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord and he will repay him for his deed.

Setting: Meet at the church.

Activities: Gathering items to give to the needy such as clothing, etc.

Spiritual Growth: The joy of giving.

Learning Opportunity: Putting a smile on someone else's face. Learning it's much better to give than to receive.

Other:

Theme: Luke 18:16

Setting: A Park.

Activities: Games, balloons, rock painting, petting zoo

Spiritual Growth: Taking care of nature and animals.

Learning Opportunity: Taking care of God's land and creatures.

Other:

WMF BIBLE STUDY ORDER FORM

Please indicate the number of Bible study books that you wish to order in the line before the Bible Study from the list below. The individual pricing of the books follows the Bible study title.

Mail order to:

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Church _____ City/State _____

# _____	Seeing the Light of God in the Face of Christ by Vicki Johnson	\$15 each = _____
# _____	Philippians-Exuberant Joy by Angie Lombardo	\$14 each = _____
# _____	Women of Redemption by Tami D. & Michele M.	\$13 each = _____
# _____	Behold Our God by Karen, Anne, Gwen & Wendy	\$13 each = _____
# _____	A Study on 1 Timothy by Jeanette Berntson ,	\$12 each = _____

The following studies are available for the cost of postage only. We are trying to cut down on our overstock. If you know of a way to put these studies into use in neighborhood groups, nursing homes, prison ministries we would appreciate you

# _____	God's Servants Teach us Life Lessons by Beverly Enderlein
# _____	Lessons In Acts (theme study) By Joan Culler
# _____	A study in the book of COLOSSIANS by Jeanette Berntson
# _____	A Word study through the book of EPHESIANS by Kathy Horneman
# _____	Following Christ – A Disciples Walk of Faith by Vicki Johnson
# _____	Pearls for a Princess By Faylin Myhre
# _____	Joseph By Candace Johnson
# _____	Sweet Freedom's Song By Mary Christenson
# _____	Living Water By Bunny Meyer
# _____	Gift of Grace By Nancy Holcomb
# _____	Image of Christ in Women By Jane Emerson
# _____	I & II Samuel By Joanne Segerdahl & Mary Clark
# _____	Freedom's Holy Light By Mary Christenson

TOTAL _____

Make checks payable to WMF of AFLC and send your order to WMF Treasurer, Margie Lee, PO Box 118, Beulah ND 58523. You can email to margieleend@gmail.com or call 701-870-2259 with your order. Top a5 studies are as listed and can be paid for at time of ordering or billed. The ones for shipping cost will be billed to you. Thank you!

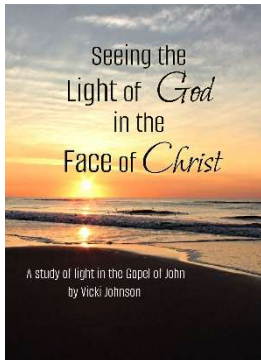
WMF Bible Study List

Below is a list of the Bible studies that are available to order. The Bible studies and order form can also be found at <https://www.aflc.org/women/resources/bible-studies/>. Orders can be made on the order form included in this manual or by contacting WMF Executive Secretary, Dawn Johnson, 2991 30th Ave Wilson WI 54027 or 715-772-4454. You may send payment with the order or be billed for the order. Books marked with *** have a limited number available.

Seeing the Light of God in the Face of Christ

A study of light from the book of John

Written by Vicki Johnson



As we study together, we'll see that God is good, and His Light reveals the sin hiding in all of us. He alone offers us the blessed remedy His light brings for redemption from sin. Without His light, we are bound up in sin and the lies it produces - we remain residents forever in the domain of darkness. We see all of this in the face of Jesus Christ. God seeks to penetrate our lives with His true, pure Light through His Son, Jesus Christ. The stories and teachings of Jesus serve to illuminate the scriptural Truth from which we learn and live.

"For God, who said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness,' is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." 2 Corinthians 4:6 NASB1995

Every lesson in this Bible study begins with a **Light Cue** verse. These are statements by or about Jesus, recorded throughout the gospel of John, which pertain to the Light of God.

The 2025 WMF Bible study **Seeing the Light of God in the Face of Christ** will be \$15 each.

Philippians-Exuberant Joy by Angie Lombardo

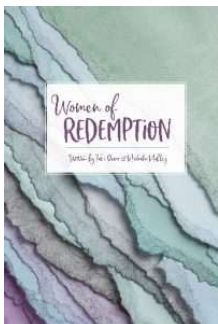


In this study, we will follow Paul, the prisoner of Christ, in his journey of genuine joy, love, grace, peace, and self-revelation. We will discover his ultimate goal in life. What was that goal? Paul desired to know Christ, to really know Him better and better, to experience the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings. This may seem to be a lofty goal, but amazingly, this goal is available to us as well. That's a heady thought! It is my prayer that we, like Paul, will experience a deep desire to know Jesus Christ better.

Come with me as we embark on a journey of Exuberant Joy!

2024 WMF Bible study **Philippians-Exuberant Joy** will be \$14 each.

Women of Redemption by Tami Demo and Michele Mobley



Throughout this Bible study we hope for you to learn that God's perfect plan does not depend on your perfect obedience but on God's perfect Sovereignty. We will look at these Old Testament women who lived imperfect lives and yet God's plans still prevailed. Be encouraged that God's will is sovereign no matter how flawed we are. Just like the women of redemption in this study, God rescues us from our sin, we are restored to a relationship with Him and through His faithfulness, we are redeemed.

"For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." Colossians 1:13-14

The 2023 WMF Bible study **Women of Redemption** will be \$13 each.

Behold Our God by Karen Floan, Anne Presteng, Gwen Berge, Wendy Westlake

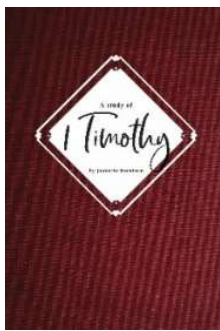


As we behold God in Psalms 90-100, we are overwhelmed with His mighty power as Creator and Ruler of heaven and earth. We are humbled by His holiness and His plan of Salvation. We see His faithfulness in our lives and throughout all generations.

Overwhelmed by joy or overtaken by sorrow, God hears the cry of our hearts, He draws us to Himself, and His presence changes us. It is the Almighty God who lovingly commands us to praise Him for our good and His glory.

This Bible study is **\$13.00 each**.

A study on 1 Timothy by Jeanette Berntson

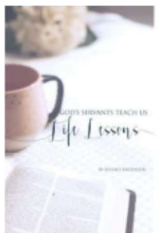


This is an inductive study on 1 Timothy. Why is what you believe important? Does it matter what we do at church? Does it matter how we live? Should we have requirements for our pastors? God has given us clear teaching on the role of the church. He wants us to hear His Word. He wants our churches' teaching and our beliefs to be the same doctrine found in the Bible. Only teaching from God's Word has the power to create repentance, faith, and love. Jesus came to save sinners and He brings His salvation to the world through His Word, preached and believed by the Church. May God bless you as you study 1 Timothy. God wrote this letter through the Apostle Paul to Timothy. Paul often refers to truths from other parts of the Bible. Timothy had studied God's Word and knew what Paul meant. To understand 1 Timothy, we will also take the time to learn what God teaches us from related Bible passages.

This Bible study is **\$12.00 each**.

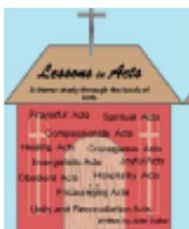
Studies from here down are for the cost of postage only.

God's Servants Teach Us Life Lessons by Beverly Enderlein



This is a study of the “old favorites” at first glance might be too familiar to be captivating. However, powerful lessons can be drawn from the real life events of God’s people through the ages. As we enjoy reading and discussing each one, we want to seek richer applications for ourselves. God’s Word is living and powerful. It is always current. Its lessons are given for our admonition and instruction. Let’s trust God to teach us as we journey together with God’s servants. (this study has 12 lessons).

LESSONS IN ACTS – A theme study through the book of Acts by Joan Culler



Instead of a chronological approach, this study will address a wide variety of themes and their applications for us. What can we learn from the early followers of Christ? How did they respond to and resolve the problems they encountered? Can we imitate the living examples of ministry described? Can we, too, “turn the world upside down?” (Acts 17:6 ESV).

A study in the book of COLOSSIANS by Jeanette Berntson



This is a letter the apostle Paul wrote to the church in Colossae. When Paul's co-worker, Epaphras, visited Paul, he related both his joy and concern for the Colossian church. False teachings were threatening the believer's faith in Christ. The Colossians were being told to gain a secret acknowledge of God, perform rituals, and refrain from certain activities to be complete Christians. Paul combats these false teachings by presenting Christ's person and work as completely sufficient for Christians salvation and daily walk. Paul also describes the Christian life that flows from the complete salvation we continue to receive from Christ. no action of ours adds anything to our standing before God. Having been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection and having received faith through the hearing of the Gospel, we are complete Christians.

A Word study through the book of EPHESIANS by Kathy Horneman



Ephesians is a very important, concise and practical book on growing in Christ. It starts with knowing Jesus Christ and moves to practical living, interacting with others, and then, how to be victorious in our walk. It touches every area of our lives, as Christ should control every area of our lives.

Following Christ – A Disciple's Walk of Faith by Vicki Johnson



We are each called to journey with our Savior, a life-long walk that is uniquely suited to each believer's development and growth in Christ. Sometimes, we are tempted to compare our walk with another's, evaluating progression, perfection and punctuality. However, the evaluation lies within Jesus' jurisdiction, with the fruit of the Spirit as evidence of our walk's success. But it isn't enough to begin the journey well. We must finish well, if we want to receive the reward. The Apostle Paul encourages us in Philippians 3:14, where he says, "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." Let's walk this walk in truth and humility with our eyes on Jesus and our hands outstretched to help others cross the finish line of faith.

Pearls for a Princess by Faylin Myhre



This study is a topical study that as you can see deals with "P" words that are associated with a princess. God **PICKED** you to be His and He **PURCHASED** you with the precious blood of Jesus. He loves you! You are **PRECIOUS** to Him. He is your **PROTECTOR** and **PROVIDER**. He has a **PURPOSE** just for you and **PREPARES** you to fulfill that purpose. You have the **POWER** of the Holy Spirit and the **PROMISES** in His Word as you daily walk in His **PRESENCE** giving Him **PRAISE**.

Joseph - An ordinary Life in the Hands of an Extraordinary God by Candice Johnson



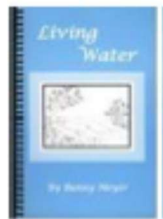
This study examines what some may consider mundane details in the life of Joseph. Let me remind ou that "all Scripture is inspired by God..." (1 Timothy 3:15a). That means God is concerned with the seemingly mundane details or they would not have been included in the Scriptures. Though no lesson focuses on FAITH, two truths are evident: 1) Joseph was faithful to God 2) God was faithful to Joseph.

Sweet Freedom's Song by Mary Christenson



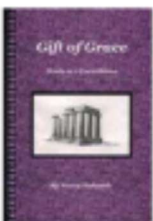
Sweet Freedom's Song will help us see how God, after preparing and giving us this land and having established this nation, has continued to be with us and work through His people throughout these decades in the United States. The biblical studies will be in the Psalms which are the ballads, hymns and songs of the Israelites. These songs express all the emotions and experiences of God's people. Still today we, God's people, continue to learn from them. We will not look so much at the political US history, but rather, the social and cultural experiences in our society from 1870 through the first quarter of the 20th century. The life applications will be reflective of people, experiences, or inventions of these times. The other portion of the study will show the direction and influence of Christians during that decade. The US history will be based out of Chicago and the Midwest. He's God, our God, in charge of the whole earth. And he remembers, remembers his Covenant – for a thousand generations He's been as good as his word. Psalm 105:7, 8.

Living Water by Bunny Meyer



Water...the precious natural resource that is essential to life. In the Scriptures we can find God's grace connected with water starting with the opening verses of Genesis. Later in this book we read how He washed our sin-stained world with the Flood, while simultaneously saving godly Noah and his family. We are led beside the still waters in the Psalms, encouraged by the promises of rain to dry land, and refreshed by the verses which tell us that His satisfies the thirsty. Jesus went into the waters of the Jordan River to be baptized by John, to fulfill all righteousness for us. He chose some of His disciples as they were fishing and later provided a miraculous catch for fish for them. He meets the Samaritan woman at the well and offers her the living water. He stills the raging waves for His fearful friends and followers and washes their feet the night before His crucifixion. As believers we look forward to the eternal rest where we will see the River of Life flowing from the throne of "God and the Lamb. "Come, all of you who are thirsty, come to the waters..." Isaiah 55:1

Gift of Grace – a Study in 1 Corinthians by Nancy Holcomb

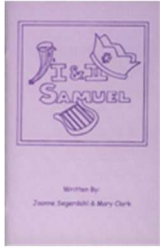


Our study of 1 Corinthians is centered on God's wonderful gift of grace which shines through in every situation that Paul addresses in this letter. We have lots to learn as we look at God's initial act of grace which secures all believers salvation and how that grace is evident in a Christian's life. We will look into the historical background of the church in Corinth and see how Paul's teachings can be applied to that young church, our churches today and to each believer in a personal and practical way so that we may all grow in "grace and holiness."

The Image of Christ in Women by Jane Emerson



Let's make it our prayer to radiate the "IMAGE OF CHRIST" daily in all that He has called us to do. "Let us go on, unto perfection" Hebrews 6:1



I & II Samuel by Joanne Segerdahl and Mary Clark

This study will take you through I & II Samuel, where you will read stories of defeat and victory, of sin, repentance, and restoration as we follow the lives of the three main characters; Samuel, Saul and David.

Freedom's Holy Light by Mary Christenson



The desire and intent of America's forefathers was to establish a country which would honor and serve God. And God, Who is faithful, sustained, guided and instructed them as they sought His Wisdom. Dedicated men and women chronicled for us God's continual leading and His provision. The evidence testifies that God has been and is ...FREEDOM'S HOLY LIGHT. Psalm 78:1.

This bible study is a full-size 8.5 x 11 book,

BIBLE STUDY HELPS

BIBLE STUDY PRIORITY FOR WOMEN'S MINISTRY

A Christ-Centered Women's Ministry must begin with a women's Bible study. If there is an active Bible study currently in session, a Christ-Centered Women's Ministry will likely evolve when given basic guidelines for organizing a Women's Ministry. If there is not a Women's Bible study within the congregation, this should be the first step in organizing a Women's Ministry.

Why begin with a women's Bible study when organizing a Women's Ministry?

1. A Christ-Centered Women's Ministry requires the participation of Christ-centered women. All church members or even all professing Christians are not Christ-centered. Therefore, the need for a Women's Bible study, which will give the opportunity for the women to develop a personal relationship with Christ and with each other.
2. When we consider the following verses, it is evident that knowing the Word is the key ingredient to a successful Women's Ministry.
 - a. "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17
 - b. "All a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the LORD." Proverbs 16:2
 - c. "All a man's ways seem right to him, but the LORD weighs the heart." Proverbs 21:2 (The Lord obviously felt this worth repeating.)
 - d. Then of course there are the verses in 1 Timothy 2:9-15 that help women recognize their areas of service and will prevent the upsetting of God's order in the church.
3. It is a good idea that a Resource Manual be written and distributed by the WMF leadership. However, we must always remember that it is only the Holy Spirit who can instill godly priorities and put them into the hearts of the women to serve the members of their church and community as Jesus would.

BIBLE STUDY HELPS

We will be blessed as we study together. As we think of the upcoming study, here are some *helpful hints* for the one who will lead the study:

1. Encourage the group members' participation. Avoid dominating and controlling the group.
2. Deal with difficult questions honestly. Be willing to say, "I don't know. Does anyone else have input?" Check with the Pastor about the answer before the next session.
3. Keep discussion Bible-centered.
4. Take advantage of silence. A good question requires time to think and respond. A few silent moments allow the group time for insight and thought. However, if prolonged, silence may indicate participants do not understand the question. After a reasonable time, use a different approach and restate the question.
5. Don't allow a particularly verbal person to monopolize group discussion. Make eye contact with others instead. Say something like: "We've had many good thoughts and ideas. Perhaps there are others of you who would like to share." Appreciate the individual who is dominating then direct the conversation to someone else.
6. Be accepting of tears and emotions. It's okay – it's healthy to cry.
7. Accentuate the positive. Say, "That's an interesting point. Thank you for sharing." This will help the women to feel affirmed and accepted.
8. Befriend group members. Free time or breaks during the meeting can be uncomfortable for those who are new to your WMF. Introduce them to others and show a personal interest in them.
9. Pray! Pray! Pray! The best preparation will be time spent in prayer!!!

Leading An Effective Bible Study

Many of us who are involved in WMF and other ministries of the church may find ourselves being asked to take a turn in leading a Bible study. Ephesians 6:10-20 contains much encouragement for the believer in her walk with Jesus that she can also apply when asked to lead a Bible study. In these scriptures, we are encouraged to put on our armor, to stand firm, and finally to pray.

“Put on the full armor of God...” God’s servants need to **be prepared** before going into battle. For the Bible study leader, of course, this means spending time going through the lesson, and asking your own questions about the lesson so that you may **anticipate and encourage questions** others may bring up. **Do not be intimidated** if you do not always have the answer for every question; as a group, you can search the Scriptures with confidence that the *“sword of the Spirit”* is always reliable and powerful. Part of the armor consists of *the belt of truth* and the *breastplate of righteousness*, found only in the Word of God, so we always take care to **emphasize the simple truth of Scripture** over and above the opinions of too many commentaries. We are also encouraged to *“have our feet shod with the readiness to share the gospel”* so this means **being ready to share the way of salvation** if the opportunity arises.

Once our armor is in place we are told several times in this passage to *“stand firm”*. Leading a study is a great opportunity for you to **apply the Scriptures to your own life first** so that your own life is standing on a firm foundation. You may want to **share how the lesson applies to your life**, and to pose some open-ended questions to **give opportunity for others to share** as well. You are the facilitator to make sure no one person, including the leader, dominates the study! It is important to be **gentle** as well as firm and to **keep healthy time boundaries** on discussions, so the study does not drag. One hour is a good time limit; start and stop on time.

Finally, *pray, pray and pray* some more. Once we have studied the lesson and applied it to our own lives, it is time to let the Lord lead the study. **Ask the Holy Spirit to be your guide** throughout your preparation and during the study through **prayer**. Ephesians 6: 12 emphasizes that Christians’ struggles are not against flesh and blood; therefore, neither should we try to do spiritual ministry in our own human strength. **Pray not only for yourself as you lead, but for the other Bible students’ hearts to be open to the Word of God.** Our *“shield of faith”* reminds us that the Bible is not just a book written by human hands, it is a living, supernatural means God uses to impart grace to its readers. **Have faith that the Scriptures can speak** to every soul and every need of every individual in the group as you lead them through the study, and rest in the knowledge that **He does need a perfect messenger to convey His perfect message!**

While leading a Bible study is a tremendous responsibility, it need NOT fill you with fear and trembling! Let me encourage you to put your armor on and step out to serve the Lord in this way!

Devotional Life, *A New Journaling Idea*

Barbara (Elmquist) Gustafson, Mesa, AZ

*“The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up,
and He let NONE OF HIS WORDS FALL TO THE GROUND!”*

I Samuel 3:19

As I read this verse a couple of years ago, I was struck with this thought: “God is so **careful** with the words of Samuel – and I am so **careless** with the Word of God!” I am thrilled as I read the Word of God and the Holy Spirit brings some passage or verse alive to me. No other words can touch the heart as God’s Word can. But my heart is saddened to realize that many times God blesses me through His Word and I am so quick to forget the blessing. I have kept a journal, but how many times do I go back and read what I have written? Seldom!

As I read I Samuel 3:19, I was struck with a new journaling idea. It took me a while, but I finally put this new idea into practice in 2003, and it has been a great blessing to me.

- (1) Purchase a simple 3-ring binder and divide it into 31 sections (1 for each day of the month).
- (2) As you have your devotions each day, write out the scripture that speaks to your heart in the section for that day of the month. Some days it is a single verse – others, a longer passage. You may choose to add thoughts of your own – simply write the Word of God.

The blessing comes as I add to the journal, reviewing the previous month's verses for that day. For example, I wrote in my journal on July 1st: “*A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*” “*A cheerful look brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the bones*” (Proverbs 15:1,30). Then I reviewed January’s entry – Genesis 4:7 “*If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it.*” Then I wrote, “What an important reminder as I begin each month. Sin is always lurking – trying to have me, but with God’s help, I must master it!”

February 1st was Numbers 10:35, 36; 12:3! March 1st – I Samuel 8:7! April 1st – *And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve Him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the Lord searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever*” (I Chronicles 28:9)! Then I wrote, “I will never forget the last words that my own father spoke to me. Although Solomon didn’t heed his father’s advice, I’m sure he never forgot these final words of David.” May

1st – “*But He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I will come forth as gold*” (Job 23:10)! June – Psalm 73:26!

God has richly blessed my life through this practice of review. It is my heart’s desire not to let any of God’s Words fall to the ground, but rather to treasure them in my heart.

BIBLE STUDY- SEARCHING SCRIPTURE

By Jan Strand

The FBI-you have most likely heard those initials before. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is the domestic intelligence and security service of the United States. When exploring a different way to meet the needs of some of the women of our congregation, our WMF group used these initials but applied a different meaning to them. Although sometimes met with a giggle when announced, the "Female Bible Investigators" was founded.

Our WMF booklet describes it this way: "This Bible study group will meet the second and fourth Saturdays of the month at 8 a.m. Place, times and dates may be changed to accommodate needs. Lessons will be done as a group effort at the meeting. This is a casual group-just come as you are."

That's right. Come as you are. And we do. Our goal has been to present a flexible and low-pressure atmosphere. Some from other congregations who are unable to attend their own women's meetings have been invited and come. God has blessed this group. Lively and deep discussion comes from the Word and the WMF Bible study booklet. Although we are not always on the lesson of the month-we meet more than the monthly groups-we find that we take more time to complete a lesson. Coffee is allowed and encouraged.

This has worked for us. So many of our women are unable to attend the strong, well-established core groups that meet on a weekday once a month. We felt we needed to find a way to include women who are in that situation. Having a relatively early Saturday time also allows for unhurried prayer time. We established early on that confidentiality was important, so we can share one another's burdens without worry. Tears and laughter happen often, sometimes simultaneously.

Perhaps the definition of the real FBI might be closer than we initially realized. Perhaps we are developing a domestic and security service for the families of our women. We praise Him for providing for us.

An apt portion of Scripture comes from Hebrews 10:24-25, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another-and all the more as you see the day approaching."

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

The *Voice of the Martyrs* is an organization started by Richard Wurmbrandt who was imprisoned in the Soviet Union for serving Christ.

The organization provides opportunity to find out how Christians are dealing with persecution in many parts of the world. *Voice of the Martyrs* provides materials to help us become both informed and to have opportunity to minister to those living in areas of persecution. Their resources include books, video presentations with discussion guides, and periodicals that keep Christians informed of what is happening to the persecuted church around the world.

We in the United States have been largely isolated from what many brothers and sisters in Christ have experienced and are experiencing elsewhere today. The materials provided by *Voice of the Martyrs* can help us realize what we have, be more thankful for it, and to be more involved in helping others that are not so blessed. Knowing how Christians are treated elsewhere can help us prepare for what may be part of our future.

PROGRAM IDEAS

Cradle Roll Program

By Kathy Klenner



THEME: God made me Special

Psalm 139:14 "for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

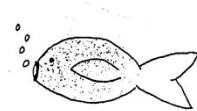
Cradle Roll programs are designed to honor children who were baptized recently or who are now graduating into Sunday School. Use this program to fit the needs of your church! Send out invitations, remember to invite grandmas too.

WELCOME guests and briefly explain cradle roll.

- Share the theme verse from Psalm 139:14.
- As an ICE BREAKER have everyone look at the palms of their hands and show their neighbor how unique and fascinatingly different the lines in our hands are.
- Open with prayer.

SUGGESTED SONGS:

- Jesus Loves Me
- My God Is So Big (Wee Sing Sunday School Songs)
- If I Were a Butterfly (Sing 'n' Celebrate for Kids, Volume II)



BIBLE STORY: Tell the creation story from Genesis 1 or use a child's story book on creation or use this simple finger play as your story from Genesis 1.

GOD MADE THE WORLD

Genesis 1

Who made the sun?
(Form circle with arms.)
God made the sun.
(Point upward.)
Who made the birds?
(Move hands in flying motion.)
God made the birds.
(Point upward.)

God made you and God made me.
(Point upward, to others, to self.)
Thank you, God, for the world we see.
Amen *(All bow heads.)*
-Ruth Odor

Who made the trees?
(Hold arms upward.)
God made the trees.
(Point upward.)
Who made you and who made me?
(Point to others and then to self.)

ANOTHER FINGER PLAY: Here's my fingers
Here's my toes
I'm unique to the tip of my nose!

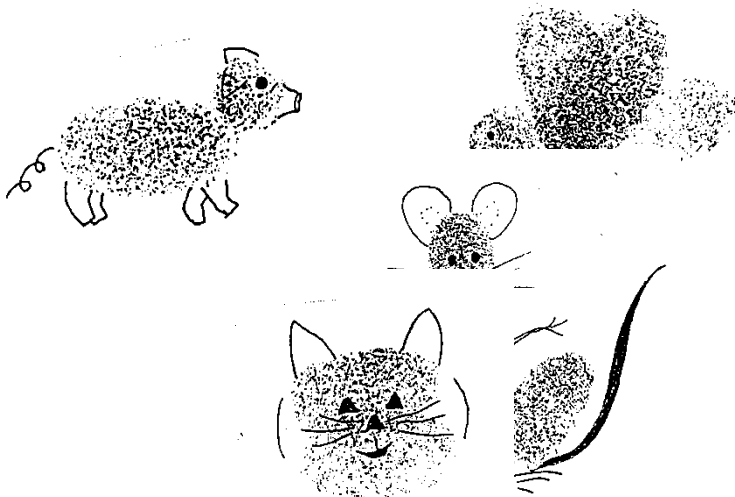
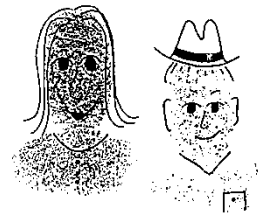
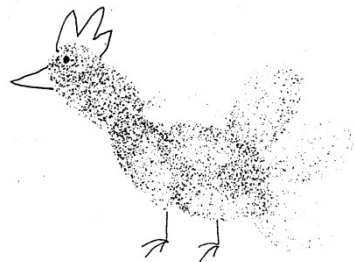
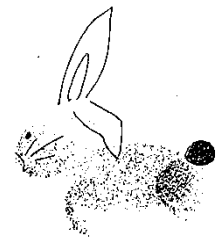
ART: Make thumbprint people and animals. See the copy, and use your imagination. Simply press thumbs or fingers on a black stamp pad and press on the paper, use colored pens if you like to add special features. Have wet wipes handy to clean up fingers.

FOOD: Thumbprint cookies

BULLETIN BOARD: The background could be white paper filled with black thumbprints and big letters of black paper on top saying "I'M UNIQUE." Add the bible Verse across the bottom in red letters.

CLOSING: Use the following responsive reading with the children.

ADULT: God made the light and air!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ADULT: God made land and water!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ADULT: God made the flowers and trees!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ADULT: God made the fruit!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ADULT: God made the sun, moon and stars!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ADULT: God made the fish, birds and animals!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ADULT: God made Adam and Eve!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ADULT: God made me!
CHILDREN: Thank you, Jesus!
ALL: Thank you! Thank you! Thank you, Jesus!



CRADLE ROLL

PROGRAM

Theme: God's Gift of Creation



1. Welcome and Prayer
2. Song: "Beautiful Savior"
3. "My Prayer" fingerplay
4. Special fingerplays done by a group of preschool or kindergarten age children.
 - A. "Animals"
 - B. "A Way To Go"
5. Object Lesson: God's Gift of Creation
6. Teach "God Made the World" fingerplay. Encourage the Cradle Roll children to take part in the fingerplay.
7. Briefly explain Cradle Roll objectives and goals.
8. Enroll new babies.

Read names of present Cradle Roll members.
Present certification of promotion to Cradle Roll graduates.
9. Closing Prayer
10. Children can be taken to an art table to make their choice of art work and can then join their parent(s) for refreshments. Or, children can have refreshments by themselves while someone reads a story like "counting Katie's Gifts." This would allow the parents a time of uninterrupted fellowship.
11. Take Cradle Roll children outside for a CREATION HUNT and make Creation Books.

CREATION BOOKS

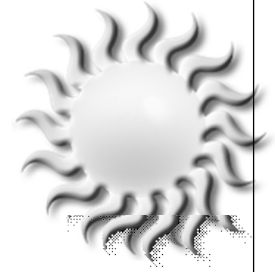
Use 3-5 Zip-Lock bags for each child. Staple the bags together on the folded end. Cover the bags with felt, fabric or paper and write on the cover "My Creation Book." Make one book for each child. Take the children on a Creation Walk and have them fill their Zip-Lock bags with all sorts of created things. (The Zip-Lock bag allows them to continue to add to their collection even after they've taken their book home.)

*Counting Katie's Gifts, 1988, Standard publishing, Cincinnati, OH (A Happy Day Book). Author: El Louise Price.

FINGERPLAYS

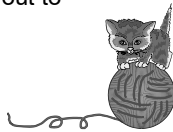
MY PRAYER

Thank you, God,
For flowers bright,
(cup hands flower-like)
For grass so green,
(Hands, palms downward, move
outward horizontally.)
For soft moonlight,
(Point upward.)
For butterflies,
(flap arms)
For wind that blows;
(Palms together at side of waist
come quickly to other side.)
For all our world
(Arm outstretched.)
We thank you so!
(Hands clasped, head bowed.)
--Ruth Vaughn



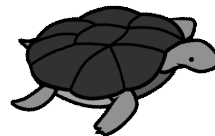
ANIMALS

Puppy dogs and kitty cats,
(Pretend to pet dog on one side and
cat on other side of chair.)
And ponies standing tall,
(Hold hand up high as if measuring height)
Tiny chicks and woolly lambs
(Hands together to hold tiny chick; then
pretend to hold lamb in arms.)
Our great God made them all.
(Point upward, then stretch arms out to
indicate all the animals.)
--Jean Katt



A WAY TO GO

A robin flies,
(Wave arms in flying motion)
A bunny hops,
(Hop up and down)
A turtle crawls so slow;
(Move legs up and down very slowly.)
God gave each animal He made
(Point to sky.)
A special way to go!
(Take two fingers and walk them up the
arm, or walk in place.)
--Jean Shannon



FINGER PLAYS

MY PRAYER

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For flowers bright,
(cup hands flower-like)
For grass so green,
(Hands, palms downward, move
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We thank you so!
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--Ruth Vaughn



GOD MADE THE WORLD Genesis 1

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(Form circle with arms.)

2) God made the sun.

(Point upward.)

1) Who made the birds?

(Move hands in flying motion.)

2) God made the birds.

(Point upward.)

1) Who made the trees?

(Hold arms upward.)

2) God made the trees.

(Point upward.)

1) Who made you and who made me?

(Point to others and then to self.)

2) God made you and God made me.

(Point upward, to others and to self)

Thank you, God, for the world you
made. Amen

(All bow heads and say together..)

NOTE: Teacher takes 1) and children 2); or
divide class into two groups.

--Ruth Odor



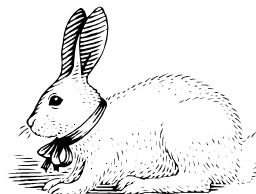
ANIMALS

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(Take two fingers and walk them up the
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GOD'S GIFT OF CREATION
(The story of Creation)
(Object Lesson)

(You may use "Box Full of Surprises" for this object lesson. You will find instructions at the end of this lesson.)

(Teach the children the phrase: "And God saw that it was good," and have them repeat it after each day of creation.)

Long, long ago there were no boys and girls, no men and women, no dogs or cats, or elephants or other animals, no birds, or butterflies, no sun in the sky, no green growing things on the ground. There was no world at all! There was nothing but GOD! God always lived. But He had no boys and girls to Jove Him, no men and women to praise Him.

DAY 1 - Genesis 1:1-5

Before God made people, He wanted to have a lovely home ready for them. God can make things by just speaking. He looked at the great blackness. "Let there be light!" (pull out white or yellow piece of construction paper) He said. At once there was the lovely bright morning light. God divided the light from the darkness (pull out a black piece of construction paper). He called the light "Day" and the darkness He called "Night". AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

DAY 2 - Genesis 1:6-8

Then God said, "Let there be a sky above (pull out cotton ball-clouds) and water beneath (pull out a piece of dark blue construction paper). And at once it was done. That was the second day. AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

DAY 3 - Genesis 1:9-13

On the third day God said, "Let the water be gathered together into seas and lakes, (pull out a picture of lake-ocean) and let the dry land be seen (pull out a landscape picture). The dry land He named "Earth" and the water He called "Seas". God saw that what He had made was good. So He said, "Let the green grass grow on the earth. (pull out a picture of grass or glue real grass onto a piece of paper) Let plants and trees grow (pull out a picture of plants and trees or real plants glued on paper) Let the plants and trees have seeds so that more plants and trees will grow." (glue some apple seeds, acorns, pine cones, etc. on a piece of paper and pull out of the box) AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

DAY 4- Genesis 1:14-19

On the fourth day God said, "Let there be lights in the sky to divide the day from the night, and to give light to the earth." He made the sun (pull out a picture of the sun) for the daytime and the moon (pull out a picture of the moon) and stars (pull out the picture of stars) for the nighttime. AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

DAY 5 - Genesis 1:20-23

On the fifth day God said, "Let fish (pull out the picture of fish) swim in the water and birds (pull out the picture of birds) fly in the air." He made small and great fish, and many kinds of flying things. AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

DAY 6 - Genesis 1:24-31

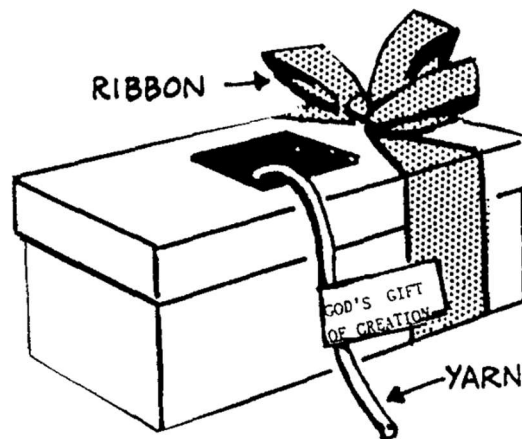
On the sixth day God said, "Let there be animals upon the earth." (pull out the picture(s) of various animals) And at once there were all kinds of animals walking and hopping and running and creeping upon the earth. All of them were made by God.

At last the lovely world was ready for people. Finally God made a man and a woman (pull out pictures of people) to live in the beautiful home which he had made for them. AND GOD SAW ALL THAT HE HAD MADE, AND BEHOLD, IT WAS VERY GOOD.

DAY 7 - Genesis 2:1-3

And so He rested on the seventh day.

BOX FULL OF SURPRISES



MATERIALS:

Shoe box, gift wrap, scissors, yarn, small gifts, tissue paper, napkins, 3" X 5" card.

PROCEDURE:

1. Cut a 3" X 3" hole in the top of the shoe box. Wrap the box with gift wrap, leaving the hole open in the top.
2. Obtain a long piece of colorful yarn and the pictures for each day of creation (see creation story).
3. Tie each picture onto the yarn. Insert the yarn into the box one picture at a time.
4. Leave one end of the yarn out. Tie a card on the end of the yarn. Write on the card "God's Gifts of Creation."
5. Pull out one picture at a time as they appear in the creation account.

GOD'S GIFT OF CREATION
(Cradle Roll objectives and goals)

From my heart to yours

I'd like to share with you my concern that our little children be taught to give God the praise for all that is. Even our preschoolers are exposed to teachings about "Mother Nature", "Mother Earth", evolution, etc. There is a trend in our society to attribute divine power to such created things as the wind, the sun, the earth, fire and other things.

Our children are never too young to be taught that God is the creator of all things.

This program has 3 objectives:

1. To teach the children that God created all things.
2. To let each child know that he/she is special because God created them.
3. To thank God for all He made.

Use the "Box Full Of Surprises" (see directions) to keep the children's attention as you tell the story of creation. For each day of creation, find or draw a picture to correspond with what was created. When a specific picture cannot be found, simply use a colored piece of paper to symbolize what was created (i.e.: "light" - use white or yellow construction paper, etc.)

Encourage the children to identify the items of creation as you pull them out of the box. The first few days may be difficult but as you come to more familiar items it will get easier.

ADDITIONAL IDEAS OF DECORATIONS, ETC.

SPOOL ANIMAL

A spool animal (see directions) can be made for each child. Write the child's name on the front of a card and the verse, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." (Ps. 139:14), on the back. Tie it around the animal's neck with twine or string.

CREATION ROCKS

Pick nice, smooth rocks (one for each child) to decorate with colored markers. You can draw creation pictures on the rock, print a Bible verse about creation (ie: Gen.1:31a; Ps. 139:14), or print the child's name. (or any combination of the above - Be Creative!)

CREATION PLACEMATS

Decorate a piece of construction paper with pictures of created things and cover with clear contact paper (leaving a 1/4-in. border). Use on the table at each place setting.

IDEAS FOR REFRESHMENTS

JIGGLERS

4 packages (4-serving size each) OR 2 packages (8-serving size each) JELL-C Gelatin, any flavor
2 1/2 cups boiling water

Pour gelatin into bowl. Add 2 1/2 cups boiling water to gelatin. Stir with a rubber scraper until gelatin is completely dissolved, about 2 minutes.

Pour into 9x13-inch pan. Put pan into refrigerator to chill until firm, about 3 hours. Take pan out of refrigerator. Put about 1 inch of warm water in sink. Dip just bottom of pan into warm water for 15 seconds.

Use animal shape cookie cutters to cut gelatin into any shapes you wish. (If you do not have animal shape cookie cutters, cut gelatin into squares with a table knife.)

Lift shapes out of pan with your fingers. Makes about 24 small shapes.

JIGGLERS, CREAMY-STYLE

4 packages (4-serving size each) OR 2 packages (8-serving size each) JELL-C Gelatin, any flavor
2 1/2 cups boiling water
1 cup cold milk
1 package (4-serving size) JELL-C Instant Pudding, Vanilla Flavor

Pour gelatin into bowl. Add 2 1/2 cups boiling water to gelatin. Stir with rubber scraper until gelatin is completely dissolved, about two minutes. Cool to room temperature, about 30 minutes.

Pour 1 cup of cold milk into shaker. Add pudding mix. Put lid on shaker very tightly. Shake very hard for at least 1 minute. (Be sure to hold top and bottom of shaker tightly.)

Open shaker. Pour pudding quickly into gelatin. Stir with wire whisk until mixture is all the same color. Pour into 9X13-inch pan. Put pan into refrigerator to chill until firm, about 3 hours.

Use animal shape cookie cutters to cut gelatin into any shape you wish. Lift shapes out of pan with your fingers.

DIRT CUPS

2 cups cold milk
1 package (4-serving size) JELL-O Instant Pudding, Chocolate Flavor
3 1/2 cups (8-ounce container) COOL WHIP Whipped Topping, thawed
1 package (16 ounces) chocolate sandwich cookies, crushed, divided
Pour 2 cups of cold milk into bowl. Add pudding mix. Beat with wire whisk until well blended, about 2 minutes. Let pudding stand 5 minutes.

Stir whipped topping and 1/2 of the crushed cookies into pudding very gently with rubber scraper until mixture is all the same color. Place about 1 tablespoon of the remaining crushed cookies into bottom of each paper or plastic cup.

Fill cups about 3/4 full with pudding mixture. Top each cup with the rest of the crushed cookies. Put cups into refrigerator to chill until set, about 1 hour. Garnish with silk or plastic flowers, candy worms, frogs or bugs, if you wish.

Makes 8 to 10 Dirt Cups

Spool Animal

Materials: Spool Animal Patterns (including ear patterns), spools (or tissue rolls cut in two), construction paper, glue, scissors, cotton balls for sheep, yarn and photocopy machine. Optional—scraps of black, pink and brown felt, wiggle eyes.

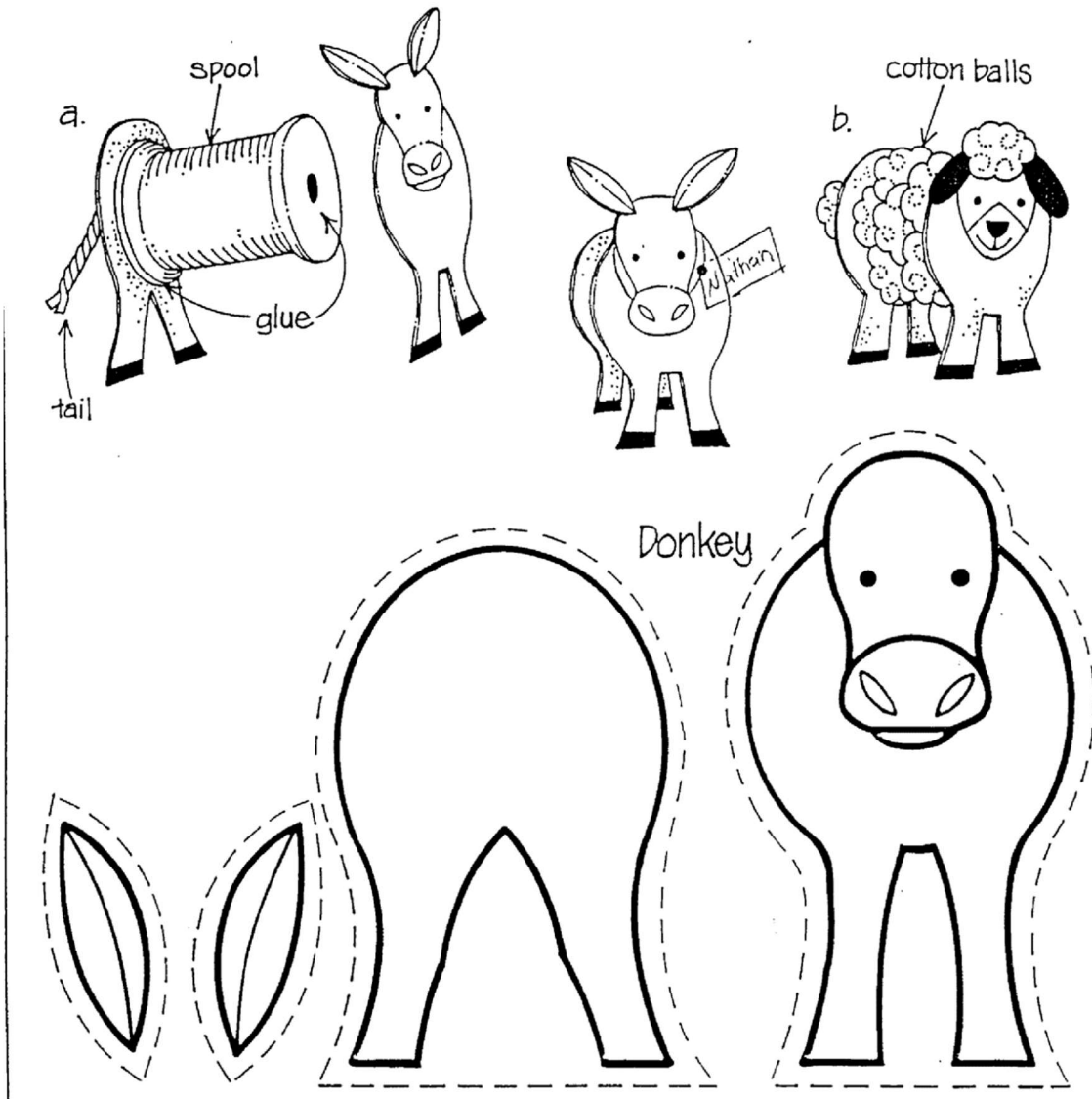
Preparation: Choose an animal related to the lesson for each child to make. Photocopy Animal Pattern onto construction paper—one for each child. Cut yarn into 2- inch (5-cm) lengths for Donkey, Cow or Pig tails.

Instruct each child in the following procedures:

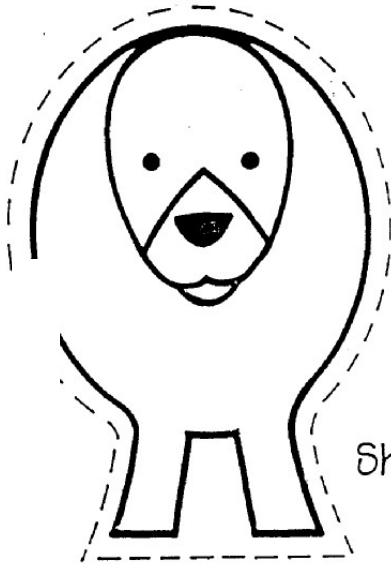
- Use scissors to cut out Animal Pattern pieces.
- Glue yarn or cotton ball to back piece for tail.
- Glue ears to animal's head. Let dry.
- Glue front and back body pieces to spool (sketch a). For lamb, glue cotton balls to spool (sketch b).

Enrichment Idea: Children glue felt ears (cut out b teacher) and wiggle eyes to animal.

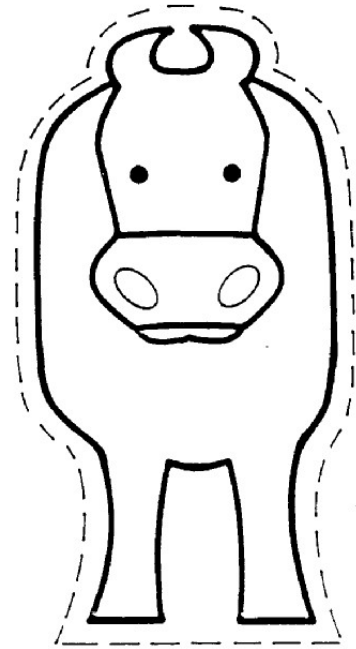
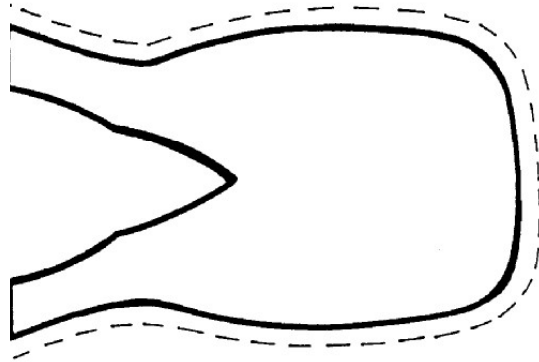
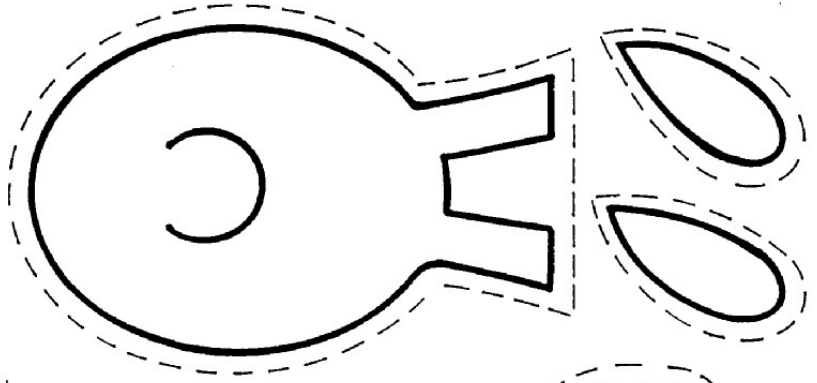
Conversation Suggestions: What kind of animal did you make? What kind of animal did we hear about in our Bible story? When you go home, who will you tell about our Bible story?



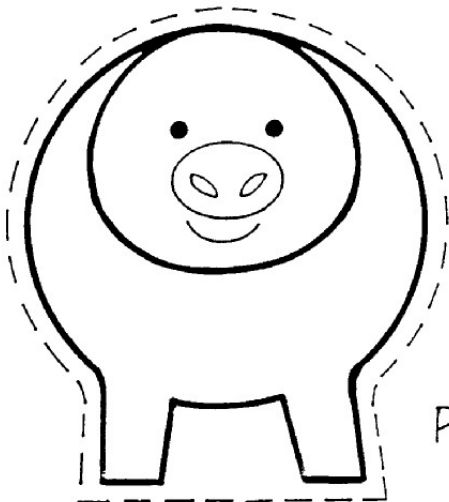
Spool Animal Patterns



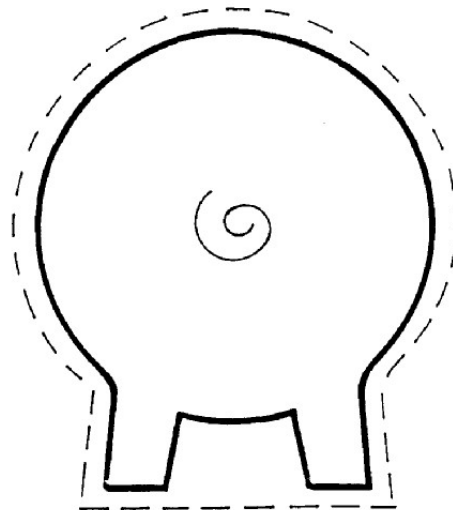
Sheep



Cow



Pig



CRADLE ROLL PROGRAM

DANIEL AND THE LIONS DEN

Daniel 6:1-23

By Mary Pollestad

PURPOSE: Teach the children in their language and understanding that we must always follow what God wants us to do. No matter what, God will take care of the situation and us. Teach the children to trust even though they can't see the outcome.

TELLING THE STORY: Tell the story in your own words including the use of pictures or flannel graph. Consider purchasing a hardcover book to tell the story. (Hardcover books can be purchased at Michaels Craft, grocery stores, or Christian bookstores. Purchase enough books for every child to take home.)

SONG: Teach the children the song "Dare To Be A Daniel." (Sing the song before the story and after. Follow up with singing the song during craft time.)

CRAFT: Lion Magnet for fridge.

DECORATIONS: If you will serve a little lunch, you can have brown and yellow napkins. You could serve animal crackers as one of the little snacks. (You could pick out all the lions if you wish.)

MATERIALS FOR CRAFT:

- Find a small picture of a lion that you can trace.
- Go to Kinko's or another print shop and ask them to print the patterns you have made on to brown card stock.
- Purchase puzzle pieces from Michaels craft store.
- Purchase wiggly eyes from Michaels craft store.
- Orange and brown paint (spray or liquid)
- Purchase magnets to glue on the back of the lion.

Cut around the lions on the brown cardstock. Draw the face on the lion leaving room for the wiggly eyes. Draw the tail on the body. Spray paint the puzzle pieces with brown and orange paint or brush paint them. After the paint is dry hot glue the orange and brown pieces around the lions head to form the mane. Pieces overlap each other a little. Glue magnet on the back of the lion so that the lion can be put on the fridge at home. The children could probably glue the eyes on the lion or put the magnet on the back of the lion, otherwise the lions will pretty much have to be done before the cradle roll party. Once again emphasizing all of the time how God takes care of us. He protected Daniel from the lions' mouths. How we should always do what God tells us to do and He will work everything out for us.

Program for Elementary Age Children

We have the privilege of sharing activities with elementary age children and encouraging them in mission service at home and abroad. This could be done on a monthly basis during the school year or the summer. Providing activities give the children opportunities to grow through service.

A variety of activities that children can participate in are the following:

- Praying and witnessing
- Doing for others, i.e. for the elderly they may rake leaves, vacuum, polish furniture, run errands, etc.
- Making crafts
- Visiting and giving programs at nursing homes
- Becoming acquainted with the missionaries and their families
- Writing to missionary children
- Collecting items for the mission field (A list of suggested items is included in the Resource Manual or available from the Executive Secretary.)
- Preparing greeting cards for Brazil with Portuguese verses (Verses are available from the AFLC World Mission office.)
- Creating a logo that might be used on flyers, posters or T-shirts
- Encouraging the children to give monies to support a child or national worker in India or one of our other mission fields.

It is important to keep the goal of a mission emphasis in Sunday School, Vacation Bible School and any special group that meets on a regular basis.

MISSIONS IN SUNDAY SCHOOL

Missions is carrying out the call the Lord has given for you to do for Him whether in your home town, in another state or across the world in another country.

Matthew 28:18-20 “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go (while you are going – Greek) therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.”

SUGGESTIONS

1. Missions Sunday – One Sunday a month, instead of breaking into classes, focus on missions. Show DVDs, present projects, read mission stories, etc.
2. Missionary of the Month – Each Sunday School opening, spend 5 minutes: showing picture of missionary and family, telling about their ministry, sharing some of their stories, and collect a special Sunday School offering for them.
3. Create Fun Ways to Collect Funds for Missions
 - Little Red Wagon (Coins)
 - Baby Bottle (Miriam Infant Home)
 - Yard Sale Proceeds
 - Mission Dinners
 - Ideas?
4. Crafts to Reinforce the Mission You Are Presenting

For example: Candy Airplanes – Size 16 rubber bands, life savers, Smarties, Bible verse on stickers (1/2” x 1 3/4 “), gum, snack size baggies. Put rubber band through two life savers (tires). Put gum (wings) into two loose rubber band ends. Next slide in the Smarties (fuselage) in between the life savers. Put Bible verse stickers on the gum (wings). You now have a candy mission airplane – carrying the gospel to the world.
5. Expose Sunday School Students to Real Missionaries

If any missionaries are in the area, have them come to speak with the children for a special Sunday School hour.
Have Sunday School children host missionaries in their homes.
6. Survey

How many of you asked Jesus to be your Lord and Savior before the age of 13?
How many of you were called into missions before the age of 13?

HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO EXPOSE THE LITTLE ONES TO JESUS AND MISSIONS AT AN EARLY AGE!!!!

RESOURCES

Websites:

www.aflcworldmissions.org/wm/resources/vbs-project-ideas.htm

www.aflchomemissions.org/alaska/new-overview

www.ministry-to-children.com/missionary-stories-for-kids/

www.missionsfestinternational.org

www.jaars.org

www.wycliffe.org

www.maf.org

www.ntm.org

www.ntm.org/aviation

AFLC Resources:

World Missions – www.aflc.org (World Missions Tab)

- Request DVDs of missionaries (Paul & Becky Abel Brazil Presentation 2010), missionary prayer letters, special projects lists, SS and VBS ideas.

Home Missions – www.aflc.org (Home Missions Tab)

- AK Mission (see above info)

Ambassador Publications Catalog

- “Missions for Children” – Visual Stories and Other Resources
- Various Mission DVDs in DVD Section

Ambassador Publications also has a lending library for a small fee for postage and handling.

Missionary Books:

Missionary Chronicles, Ambassador Publications

Short missionary stories from our own AFLC missionaries and other missionaries connected to the AFLC.

50 Years Under the Southern Cross by John H. Abel, Mercy & Truth Publishers

John and Ruby Abel’s missionary adventures in Brazil as told by John.

Operation World by Jason Mandryk, Biblica Publishing

1-2 page summaries of countries all over the world. Good prayer guide for specific countries.

Other Places to Find Mission Books:

Christian Book Distributors, Christian Book Stores, Amazon, Used Book Stores, etc.

Ideas for Putting Together A Mission Festival

Adapted from workshop by Carol Knapp

The church that is mission minded is a church that grows. When we look outside ourselves and our own congregation to the needs of others, in our community or across the sea, we gain new perspectives and understanding into the Body of Christ.

CHOOSE YOUR EMPHASIS ACCORDING TO ACTS 1:8 Is your emphasis local ministries?(Jerusalem) State or United States ministries? (Judea, Samaria) International Ministries? (end of earth)

Local/U.S.

Pregnancy Center

Shelter House

Food Shelf

Thrift Store

Ethnic groups: Hispanics, Somalis, etc

International

AFLC Missions: Brazil, Mexico, India

AFLC Missionaries who are on loan to:

Eastern European Missions Network

Lutheran Mission Society (Alaska)

World Mission Prayer League

CHOOSE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE children only? Adults only? Youth only? Everyone together?

IDEAS FOR PLANNING A MISSION FESTIVAL?

- 1) set up booths or stations in your fellowship hall or church basement. Set out books from your church library that teach about missions.
- 2) set up several classrooms for different subjects and groups rotate through them. Research a missionary family and the country they are in, then fix up each classroom to show an aspect of that country and the missionary and his work, family: i.e. food, music, people, geography/topography, etc.
- 3) decorate one larger classroom with pictures from National Geographic magazine and local photos. Local/world. In the classroom, have a missionary video (list available from AFLC Parish Ed.) or computer game (Wycliffe has a computer game to show what a Bible translator would do)
- 4) do a hands- on project art project
- 5) invite a missionary speaker on furlough, someone who was a short-term missionary to another country, a student from Ministry Training Institute (MTI) – contact AFLC, an international student studying in a local college.
- 6) serve food from a foreign country
- 7) music-teach a familiar chorus in another language
- 8) write letters/e-mails to missionaries
- 9) hang a current map of the world and make a game of identifying the countries
- 10) current map of the world with photos of missionaries and a string or arrow showing where they are stationed.
- 11) Give a book report on an missionary story
- 12) power point presentations or videos from AFLC Missions.

Much depends on how much time and energy goes into planning and organizing a Mission Festival.

Be creative – Use the talents in your congregation!

IDEAS FOR PROPOSED
MISSION FESTIVALS

AND OTHER MISSION IDEAS
(Submitted by Delores Berkas, Bloomington, MN)

For Mission Festivals, we took a whole Sunday School morning and the whole church basement. We used signs, maps, pictures – lots of color. We used the kitchen counter with the sliding doors used when serving food partway open as our puppet stage. The puppet story emphasized “home missions” through a story about Rusty inviting a neighbor to Sunday School.

We used large cardboard boxes to make awnings, hung over the wires that normally hold our curtains—we scalloped one and painted it with tempera paints in red and white stripes. We covered one with overlapping pieces of brown wrapping paper to simulate a thatch roof. One of these was a place for the display of some artifacts. We had stations – kids went to a certain area for each country to hear short reports on the country and missionaries that had been written and researched by Sunday School teachers and students. These were sort of like radio broadcasts. There was another area with a short video on one of our missionaries. We taught a song in a foreign language. We used lots of pictures from National Geographic – mounted on construction paper, in the booths for India, Brazil and Mexico. Once we borrowed the flags from the mission office. A game was invented by one of our members, Jim Keller, similar to “Where in the World is Carmen San Diego?” It taught the kids the location of the cities where our missionaries work. We also gave some prizes. We had several things from Brazil and India.

And of course we served food. I made samosas, a favorite snack from our children’s growing-up years in Madagascar, but it is also served elsewhere. They are easy to make. It’s a little browned ground beef with onion in a wonton square and deep-fried in oil. One can make a lot of them in an hour. We also served candied peanuts, orange and pineapple slices, etc.

There are many ideas here, and not all would have to be used at one time. We had done parts of this before and since then, too. The variety and excitement of that morning was great. This is a lot for a morning, but we had lots of volunteers to help.

One year, we did a missionary quiz as part of WMF – having the ladies in groups and asking them to name the missionaries and their children, etc. – some serious and some funny questions. We gave out missionary prayer cards (from World Missions) to each one and a notebook to keep them as a prayer journal, encouraging them to pray for them by name.

Our WMF sends birthday cards to the missionaries each month and several boxes a year. That does help keep some more awareness.

A SHORT video – perhaps from one missionary a year (up-to-date) – could be shown at a WMF meeting. It takes frequent exposure to let people know what is happening. People who have visited the mission field, such as Paul and Laurie Nash (Brooklyn Park, MN) or Elden and Faith Nelson (Rockford, MN) have a real passion for missions and are willing to share their experiences. There are many others – possibly some from your area – that could be contacted to share in your congregation.

MISSION FESTIVAL IDEAS
(submitted by Elaine Kohl, Brookings, SD)

Make a large map of our mission lands. Show major cities and perhaps also show crops, topography, birds, animals, mining and other activities with pictures on the map. Then name the areas where we have mission families or mission congregations, Bible school, etc. Use pictures and/or names of each family and attach by string or yarn to where they live.

Enlarging on this idea, a booth could be made for each missionary family in our AFLC. A family or individual could be responsible for one mission family booth. They could find out as much as possible about the missionaries, the country and place where they work, and the work itself. They can have prayer cards (from World Missions) or the new prayer books to pass out and be a source of information for all who pass by.

* * * * *

We are told that many people in the world go to bed hungry. As Americans, this is hard for us to comprehend. A way to demonstrate this is to serve what many in the world eat.

At our church, two different menu's were served; one a typical American meal with meat, potatoes, vegetable, salad, dessert and beverage; the second – a very small serving of rice and beans and water. As you entered, you drew a slip of paper to see which meal you would get.

Having rice and beans and water was all the more difficult when you sat next to someone who had a full meal.

We found this was a good way to lead into a presentation of our mission work in Brazil, Mexico, India and Africa.

* * * * *

If there is a college or university near your church, you have a ready resource of learning about other countries. Most foreign students are eager to share about their home country. You will need to get acquainted with them to see if they are able to be a presenter or man a booth. At the very least, they can provide information about their country and its culture and recipes if you want to include food in your fair. They may also loan you objects from their country for a display such as maps, money, pictures, crafts, etc.

If the persons you contact are not Christian, you have an opportunity to share your faith, too. There will be a natural opening as you plan with them, but invite them to your home several times and pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance before you give the full Gospel message. Put yourself in their place and think how you would accept the message of Islam or Buddha if you were studying in their land.

Some of the students will be Christian, so then you can have them share about that as well as their nation and culture.

Truly, there are a surprising number of foreign students and immigrants in America. Be alert to the possibilities in your community.

IDEAS FOR **MISSIONS AWARENESS**

(submitted by Cheryl Aakre, Stephen, MN)

In our Sunday School, we would take the last Sunday of each month during our opening exercises to focus on one of our missionary families. We would try to find out as much as we could about the area/country they were living and serving the Lord in and the work they were involved in. We had a world map to show where they lived from where we lived. We would use pictures from National Geographic or other sources to show how different their houses or cities might look. We would try to have communication with the family that was being featured to share what was happening in their ministry and with their family. We would close the short time with prayer for them and any prayer concerns the missionaries had shared with us.

Another year, we decided to focus one entire month of Sunday school class hours on missions in the AFLC. Our Sunday School Superintendent asked each of the High School classes and their teacher to research one missionary family in advance. They were to make a presentation on a designated Sunday. We featured one country per Sunday. (So when Brazil was featured, each of the missionary families working in Brazil and their work was highlighted.) Each class was given the addresses and email addresses of their missionary family and was told to “be creative.”

The first Sunday opened with a member who was a former missionary-child (raised in another country with missionary parents) asking the children if they knew what a missionary was. She dressed in a style from the country she grew up in, carrying a Bible and hymnbook from that country – pretending she was going to hear the missionary speak in her hometown that Sunday. (She had brought some artifacts from her country to share for the children to see and touch.) She shared about how God calls some to “go into all the world” and share the good news. She also shared some of what growing up in another country/culture was like.

Each Sunday, a world map was set up in the front of the sanctuary, and the class would show where their family lived and worked. Most classes shared some information about the country itself (type of climate, agricultural products grown or types of major industry, major religions, etc.), Each class had a picture of the missionary family they were sharing about. Letters/parts of letters were read from the missionary families. One class had received some information from their family about the work that was going on and they decided to present it in skit form. Each student played a character (or two) and made it very interesting for the congregation. Each Sunday, there was time allowed for questions and answers.

The last Sunday of the month, our congregation was treated to a few people from our congregation/community who had visited a country on some short-term mission work. They showed a short video they had taken while they were there and brought with them some artifacts from that country. They shared some of their experiences and had a question and answer time, where many questions were asked as to what it was like to be in another country where there is so little materially, what the church was like there, how do you communicate, etc. It was very thought provoking and challenging to our members.

In Memoriam / Honorary Membership

Program

By Kathy Klenner



Theme: Prayer

WELCOME: Welcome honored guests and visitors. Our theme for today is prayer.

What a privilege it is to pray.

“For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you, and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers.” Ephesians 1:15-16

These verses talk about faithfulness and prayer. May the following skit encourage us to be prayer warriors for the furtherance of God’s Kingdom.

SKIT

Characters:

Job Interviewer – Donna

Ladies seeking the job – Angie, Jennifer, Kay

Begin with Angie standing in an area of the room separate from the main scene.

ANGIE:(Holding up the newspapers want ads, deep in thought.) Says aloud as she reads: “Wanted: Prayer Warriors – now that is something I could do.” (She exits.)

Main Scene – a simple table or desk with the interviewer on one side and those being interviewed facing her.

DONNA: Good morning Jennifer, come in and have a seat.

JENNIFER: (Very enthusiastic) Hi, I saw your ad in the paper for someone to pray. I am so excited—I say the Lord’s Prayer every night and like wow it would be so easy. I can’t believe it!!! So how do I get started.

DONNA: Well Jennifer you are certainly enthusiastic but this job does require more than just someone reciting the Lord’s Prayer.

JENNIFER: (in disbelief) It does?

DONNA: We are looking for someone who desires to pray for others by name.

JENNIFER: I heard the pastor talk about that in his sermon – I guess I better listen more carefully.

DONNA: Thanks for stopping by Jennifer.

JENNIFER: Thank you. Bye (Jennifer exits and Kay enters)

DONNA: Good morning Kay, come in and have a seat.

KAY: Thanks, Good morning.

DONNA: You are here in response to our want ad looking for people to lift up others in prayer?

KAY: Yes I am. I really enjoy being part of the church prayer chain. It's great to get all that "good information" right away before others hear about it. Most of the ladies downtown at coffee are amazed at how much I find out before them.

DONNA: Kay remember the prayer chain is meant to get the requests out quickly so we can pray specifically for that individual.

KAY: (flustered) Oh yes that's right!

DONNA: Thanks for stopping by Kay.

KAY: Sure – thank you..

(Kay exits and Angie enters)

DONNA: Good morning Angie, come in and have a seat.

ANGIE: Thank you Donna. I was so convicted after I heard the message at Ruth's funeral. She was a true prayer warrior who diligently sought the Lord. Imagine her tattered Bible and her prayer notebook full of all those names of people she prayed for in our congregation. We certainly do need people to step up and pray like she so faithfully did.

DONNA: You're hired.

You may now have a special speaker on prayer and honoring those who have so faithfully served as prayer warriors and in so many other areas of service within the congregation.

OR

If this is an informal gathering you may ask a few WMF women to share how a certain person (one who is receiving the honorary membership pin) has made a spiritual impact on her life. You should include each lady so none are left out – even just as simple as someone sharing her favorite Bible verse on her behalf.

OR

Close with the following devotional that you can use to either honor women or as a memorial service.

They labor well who intercede
For others with a pressing need;
It's on their knees they often work
And from its rigor will not shrink" D. DeHaan

Read Romans 12:10-13

Honorarium

We honor you (insert the names) for so faithfully serving within our congregation and praying for others. It is with great gratitude that we say thank you and present you with the WMF pin. (At this time you may read the significance of the WMF Pin as printed in the Resource Manual, page ____.) (WMF pins can be ordered from the National WMF treasurer.)

In Memoriam

Each day, many older saints, who have continued steadfastly in prayer, leave this earth through death and move on to heaven. This creates a “job opening” for people who will commit themselves to praying faithfully. Many of these positions remain unfilled. Will you fill one of them?

Close in Prayer

Decorations: A bulletin board could be lined with want ad newsprint and a prayer theme placed on top. The tables could have fresh flowers or potted plants placed on a “doily” cut from newsprint. Small “place cards” could be placed by each person with a praying hands sticker and Bible verse on prayer printed on each. A “scrap booker” from your church could start an album of this honorarium/memoriam service and add to it in the years to come.

Honorary Membership

To honor a WMF member for faithful service

Members who have served and continue to serve in WMF may be honored each year. Have ready a WMF pin and honorary certificate, which may be ordered from the National WMF Treasurer. A special table with candles, a corsage or flower are options that enhance the occasion.

“In our local WMF we appreciate the different gifts given to our WMF women. Today we will honor (list names) for their faithful service.

I always thank God for you because of His grace given you in Christ Jesus. I Corinthians 1:4”

Hymn

Read several appropriate Scripture passages. Some suggestions include:

Ruth 2:12; Psalm 92:12-15; Philippians 1:3-6

“God has given us all different gifts so that together we might serve the Lord and accomplish the task of leading souls to Christ. As children of God we each have a special part in the building of the Kingdom. Jesus said, ‘You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last.’ John 15:16

Today we want to thank the Lord for your faithful service, (read names), in ministry to the women of the church. We thank you for your support through the years. You have been an example to us in carrying out the ministry of the WMF to our local church and also in supporting the ministries of the AFLC.

In recognition of your service, we would like to present this certificate and pin making you an honorary member in the National WMF. (Present pin, reading the description and verses printed on the card.) Congratulations and may God bless you.

WMF members have a part in fulfilling the great commission given to believers by the Lord. “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...(Matthew 28:19a).’ May God continue to use you here to do great things in the work of the WMF.”

Prayer

Hymn

“Different ways of serving are given to each of us that we may work the works of Him who sent us. May each of us be faithful in our tasks.”

NOTE: Honorary Membership certificates and pins are available from the National WMF Treasurer. Pins may also be purchased for individual use. Unless designated otherwise, proceeds from the sale of certificates and pins will help support World Missionaries and National Workers.

MEMORIAL SERVICE 1989

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, how we thank you for the opportunity of gathering together in your precious Name to honor You, to fellowship together as sisters in Christ, and to pay our respects to our departed sisters. We thank You for what You did in their lives and because of that they served others. We thank You for allowing them to be a blessing to others. Now we ask that You would instill in each of us a desire to do what You have planned for each of us. Be with us now as we continue our Memorial Service. In Your Name we pray, Amen.

HYMN: “In Heaven Is Joy and Gladness” (Concordia Hymnal #344)
(Why should we mourn when Jesus has promised us joy and gladness in heaven? Let us sing this song joyfully.)

LEADER: As we remember our loved ones let us pay tribute to those who have gone on before us as we hear God’s Word...

READER 1: Psalm 18:1-3; Psalm 19:7-10

LEADER: As we think of the passing of our sisters in Christ let us rejoice in the truth that the Lord is perfect; He is sure, the precepts of the Lord are right; the Lord is pure, He is clean. His ordinances are true. More to be desired are they than gold. Why do we strive for so many earthly things when we know there is something so much better?

READER 2: Psalm 25:10; Psalm 27:1; Psalm 28:6-8

LEADER: We should have no fear about stepping over Heaven’s thresh-hold.

HYMN: “O Happy Day When We Shall Stand” (Concordia #62)

LEADER: God’s promise is that one day we shall join those who have gone on before and be in that heavenly throng.

READER 3: 2 Corinthians 1:3-5

LEADER: We are so thankful we have a merciful God who will and can comfort us in sorrow, in sickness, or whatever the circumstance might be.

READER 4: 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; Romans 15:13

LEADER: Thank you Lord, for the joy and peace in believing. Through You we do have the hope of Eternal Salvation.

READER 5: John 14:1-3

LEADER: Isn’t it going to be nice not to have to worry about preparing our own rooms? We won’t need to wonder what color goes with what. Jesus has it all picked out. Thank you, Jesus.

READER 6: Isaiah 49:13; James 1:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

LEADER: It isn't always easy to give thanks in all circumstances but calling upon the Lord can make it possible.

READER 7: Philippians 4:4-7

LEADER: Our command is to rejoice always so that means even in the going home of a loved one. Jesus doesn't mean we are not to be sad when a loved one goes. He wept when Lazarus died. He gave us tears to vent our sorrow but then after our tears are dried our time of rejoicing begins.

READER 8: Isaiah 49:13

LEADER: It says to sing for joy for the Lord has comforted His people. Let's do that. Let us think about the words as we sing them.

HYMN: "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior" (Concordia #13)

LEADER: Thank you, ladies, for your willingness to take part in this service. I hope you have received a special blessing for doing so.

I would like to close our Memorial Service by reading the words of the Hymn...."Blest Be The Tie That Binds"

Blest be the tie that binds, Our hearts in Christian love
The fellowship of kindred minds, Is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne, We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes, our mutual burdens bear,
And often for each other flows – the sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part, It gives us inward pain.
But we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet again.

THE LORD'S PRAYER: All

Mrs. Bud Haugen
Snohomish, Washington

Memorials

A program for remembering former WMF members

It is suggested that at one meeting each year time be set aside for remembering WMF members who died during the previous year. A special table with candle and/or decorations may be used.

Read one or more appropriate Scriptures. The following are suggestions:

I John 2:25; I Peter 1:3, 4; I Corinthians 2:9; Revelation 21:4; Hebrews 4:9

Hymn: (Suggestion) “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less”

“It is our privilege to honor the memory of WMF members who have gone from this life to be with the Lord during this past year. Their faithful service is remembered, as are their testimonies in word, song, leadership and in the church.

(Light candles) Today we remember with gratitude to the Lord (read names). Let us thank the Lord for them as we pray silently.” The leader closes with prayer and/or with the Lord’s Prayer.

Hymn: (Suggestion) “Christ is the Cornerstone”

“As we remember these dear ones, let us also resolve to carry on faithfully the work they left behind. Galatians 2:20 says, ‘I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.’ We have been instructed to ‘...stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain (I Corinthians 15:58).’

Christ has no hands other than ours, no feet but those of His people. We remember today those who were examples to us. May Christ be seen, too, in us. We want to be examples, also, of Jesus’ love, joy and peace. Considering prayerfully, ‘Jesus, what would You have me to do?’ will help us make choices that honor Him. May God bless us, each one, as we go out to serve Him. Amen.”

NOTE: Faithful women and loved ones may be remembered with special gifts that should be mailed to the National WMF Treasurer. These gifts are used to help support pastors and national workers who are proclaiming the Gospel on our mission fields unless otherwise designated.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

OPENING SCRIPTURE: “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.”
Psalm 116:15

PRAYER

REMARKS:

The flowers before you are in memory of faithful Christian women who have left this earthly life and have gone home to be with the Lord.

As we gather together today, it is fitting that we pause to praise and thank God for each Christian woman who has put her trust in God and who willingly served Him as a faithful servant. We do mourn for them. We are also grateful to God for their various ways of service, whether it has been, according to Romans 12:6-8, in teaching, encouraging, serving, prophesying, giving, leading, or showing mercy. As we remember them and their gifts we can be reminded of the brevity of life and our need to be fully surrendered to the Lord. Scripture records women who faithfully served the Lord. May we also be diligent in our walk with Jesus and allow Him to rule our thoughts and actions so that we may truly glorify Him.

As each (District) name is read, I will ask that you reflect on the memory of departed loved ones that you individually have known, and silently thank and praise God for their lives here on earth.

“And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign forever and ever.” Revelation 22:5

CLOSING PRAYER:

HYMN SUGGESTION: “Children of the Heavenly Father”

Mrs. Burton Boyum
Kenyon, Minnesota

IN MEMORIAM SERVICE 1992

“For this God is our God forever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death” (Psalm 48:14)

Dear friends in Christ, as we gather this day to praise and thank the Lord for those dear ladies who so faithfully served Him in our WMF and this past year have gone home to be with Him in Heaven, let us bow our hearts to Him in prayer.

PRAYER: Father, how grateful we are for the dear ones from our midst who are now at rest from their labors of love in our WMF and are now among family and friends in Heaven. We thank you for their Christian witness, for their courage as they faced the last trial of this earthly life, knowing you were waiting to take their outstretched hands and lead them into a blissful eternity. They have been an inspiring example to us of your power and grace within, to carry us through the dark shadows. Blessed be their memory. We thank you and praise you, Dear God, for your amazing grace. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

SONG: “What a Joy to Reach the Harbor” Concordia #330.

There are flowers placed here in memory of those who served so faithfully in our WMF. In their dedication and untiring service they were a beautiful example for us to follow wherever God calls us.

Will the representatives please come forward and place a flower in the vase in memory of the dear ladies from your local/district WMF who are now at home with the Lord. (The name(s) of the deceased may be given as the flower is placed in the vase.) Please remain standing until they are all recognized. Thank you.

If I have omitted anyone, please come forward at this time, also.

As we close our service, let us remember the words of Jesus:

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:1-3).

Praise His Name.

Ladies, please be seated. Thank you.

SONG: “Face to Face” (solo) or Children of the Heavenly Father” (solo or congregation)

Let us all stand and close by repeating the Twenty-Third Psalm.

Faye James
Medicine Lake Lutheran
Minneapolis, Minnesota

1. Our Creator God made us to be creative like Him. We have the Holy Spirit to inspire us from His Word, so BE CREATIVE!!! STRETCH your mind!!
2. Choose a Bible verse. Focus on what keywords in the verse could be used as a concept to expand into the items listed on the sheet that will help organize a women's fun activity/event. Here are some examples:

O Taste and see that the Lord is Good. The Grafton WMF went on the word "taste" with a coffee party; "A Latte Fun" had a coffee and chocolate bar with many different selections. Coffee jelly beans as table favors, coffee door prizes, and a coffee bean decorated frame of the theme verse. A Program with fun music then led to more spiritual music and a speaker on the theme. The goal was to invite new neighbor ladies and friends for outreach and fellowship.

Use to help you create your own women's gathering:

Select a Setting: from your theme verse

Select an Activity: from your theme verse

Select your spiritual goal from your event:

Below are some verses and activities that the 2011 WMF Leadership Breakfast came up with to help you in your creative plans:

- A. Psalm 127:1 "Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain."
- B. Psalm 119: 103 "How sweet are Your words to my taste."
- C. Psalm 89:15 "Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim You, who walk in the light of Your Presence, O Lord."
- D. Psalm 33:12 "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people He chose for His inheritance."
- E. Hebrews 12: 1 b "--let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."
- F. Psalm 89:1 "I will sing of the Lord's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations."
- G. II Peter 3:18 a "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."
- H. I Thessalonians 4:18 "Therefore encourage each other with these words."
- I. Hebrews 10:23-25 "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encourage one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near."

Worksheet following this page to help you work up your special gathering.

CREATE A WOMEN'S GATHERING

VERSE:

SETTING:

ACTIVITIES:

SPIRITUAL GROWTH:

LEARNING OPPORTUNITY:

OTHER:

PROGRAM IDEAS FOR WOMEN'S MINISTRY

(The ideas below are only IDEAS to get your creative juices flowing. Please feel free to use the idea as is OR make adjustments to the idea just for your own group. You know the ladies in your congregation and community best, so whatever you can do to minister to them in a creative, fun way is GOOD!)

The ideas below have been shared by several women from various churches in the AFLC. Feel free to use them or take those ideas and expand into other areas as you see fit.

1. Using our resources – could have demonstrations or a speaker present ideas on using our resources well – buying, preparation and use of food.
 - a. Food preservation (canning, freezing, and drying of foods) can be demonstrated by someone.
 - b. Bread baking
 - c. Making fruit preserves
2. Pot Gardening – If someone lives in an apartment or condominium, they might enjoy having some fresh vegetables they can grow in the “pot garden”. Or if you are limited by mobility, pot gardening might be something you can do to enjoy fresh vegetables that are your favorites. Someone from a garden store, or someone you know with experience in this area, could be the presenter.
3. Demonstration with flowers – getting the maximum out of the minimum whether using garden varieties or from a florist. You could certainly ask a florist to do this demonstration but maybe there is a lady in your community who is just really good at flower arranging who could help you out here.
4. Summer (or any season) food demonstration. Someone could prepare, in a demonstration format, a special seasonal dish. Of course there would be “tastes” of it for each person attending.
5. Craft ideas – there may be many ladies in your community who are crafters. They could demonstrate a craft and maybe even lead a series of classes on certain types of crafts like knitting, crocheting, quilting, beading, scrapbooking, etc. Maybe you could have a craft night each week (for about 6 weeks?) and several people could demonstrate a certain craft. Good fellowship and mentoring opportunities can happen when we do that.
6. Have someone demonstrate remodeling clothes that are not worn out but that could be used by someone else if they were updated.

MORE WAYS TO MINISTER TO WOMEN:

7. Have a get together once a month where women will share a devotional that has spoken to them during that month. This might help encourage them to be in the Word and also to share their blessings and be an encouragement to others.
8. Special Events:
 - a. Mother’s Day Tea or luncheon
 - b. Christmas Tea
 - c. Picnic on a patio or picnic in the park (Hold your regular women’s meeting in the park and have a picnic potluck lunch).
 - d. An outing to a historical place in your area – spend time thinking about your heritage – especially your Christian heritage and how it has affected your life.
 - e. District WMF rallies – be sure your women know about and are encouraged to attend the rallies that your district has. You will get to know other women from other churches and you will also have opportunity to fellowship with women from your own church.
 - f. WMF Day at the Annual conference of the AFLC. Be sure to encourage the women from your church to attend the WMF Day. The annual conference has been called the great “family reunion” of the AFLC. The WMF Day, which is held the day before the annual conference, can be called the Women’s reunion! It is opportunity for people to get to make new friends and

renew old friendships. If all of you cannot go, can you pay for your president to go to WMF Day?

I'm sure many of you have many ideas that you can use to minister to women – both from your congregation and those outside your congregation. Whatever “fun” event you choose to plan, always include a devotional which will point you and those in attendance to Jesus. That is the purpose for which we live.

Meetings for the Seasons

EARLY WINTER

Christmas Event – TOYS OF JOY UNDER THE TREE

At your ladies Christmas party, consider asking each lady to bring a toy from a provided list to replenish the church's nursery or preschool department. The centerpieces at the table could be miniature Christmas trees with miniature gifts or toys under them (these can also act as door prizes). Have a large tree for women to put their toys under. Have a woman from your church share how a tree is a picture of our walk with Christ. For favors, consider giving each woman a wooden cutout Christmas tree.

LATE WINTER

Extreme Make-over

Spring is just around the corner and many women are concerned about making their bodies more presentable for the summer months when many wear shorts or capris and short-sleeved tops. Why not plan an Extreme Make-Over program – to “make-over” our spiritual lives as well?

Plan workshops similar to the following topics and ask the women to move from space to space around your church and learn about these various areas of their personal lives:

- **Make over your quite time:** How to have an effective personal Bible study time. Resources in preparation for the leader may be How to study the Bible by Kay Arthur or How to study the Bible for Yourself by Tim LaHaye.
- **Make over your prayer time:** Experiencing God's presence. A great resource for this would be Invitation to Solitude and Silence: Experiencing God's Transforming Presence by Ruth Haley Barton.
- **Make over your Pocketbook:** God's plan for your finances. A possible resource could be Personal Finances by Larry Burkett

I'm sure you can think of many “MAKE OVER” women's issues where it would be good to speak truth in a workshop setting.

This program idea also gives women in your WMF the opportunity to enlarge their gift for public speaking.

SPRING/ EARLY SUMMER

Garden Party: Sowing Seeds of Faith Tea

Plan a Tea based on Matthew 13, the parable of the sower. Recruit one of your women or ask an outside speaker to share about how our walk with Christ is represented by the parable. Consider having a woman read the story, “The Trellis and the Vine,” that tells the story of a tiny seed growing into what God had planned for its life.

Base your decorations on a garden theme. Set the buffet table with gardening décor, burlap covering the tables, clay pots, stepping stones to set the food on, new, clean watering cans for the beverage, etc. Each table can have a clay stepping stone with a potted flower and tea lights as the centerpiece. Door prizes can be gardening items. Each woman can receive a packet of flower seeds. Consider serving open-faced cucumber sandwiches (or another vegetable sandwich) fresh fruit, cookies, and more than one flavor of tea.

Consider selling two tickets for the price of one, so the women can invite a friend, coworker, neighbor, etc. Also, consider having a table where the women can sign up for various church ministries that need laborers in the field! Planting and harvesting a garden takes labor and so do the various ministries in the church of Jesus Christ!

FALL

A Slice of Heaven

Featuring hot apple pie and espresso. Decorate everything in Fall leaves and apples. Print the programs in the shape of an apple. Decorate the tables with red table cloths and fall leaves with a whole apple pie at the center of each table.

Can small jars of applesauce for each woman to take home with her. Attach an apple shaped tag with the scripture from Psalm 17:8, “Keep me as the apple of your eye. Hide me in the shadow of your wings.”

Have a speaker who will encourage the women sharing by sharing about the fruits of the Spirit; or bearing fruit for the Kingdom by someone leading a Bible study on Matthew 25:14 – 30 – using our gifts; or John 15:1-17 – the vine and branches.

Bountiful Blessings – A Night of Praise

Plan a women’s dinner that is focused on the blessings and praises that we receive from God. Decorate each table with cornucopias and all the fall trimmings! After the meal, have the leader focus the women’s attention on the word PRAISE. Consider choosing 6 women from the church to represent a letter from the word PRAISE. Give each of the 6 women the question, WHY DO I PRAISE GOD? And assign one letter to each woman. The first word in their answer should begin with the letter assigned to them. Such as:

- P – Praise God for my Provisions (home, finances, job, other material things.)
- R – Relationships (family, friends, neighbors, church.)
- A – Abilities (all that God has equipped me to do.)
- I – Identity in Christ (I am His child.)
- S – Savior (From the beginning of time, God planned for the sacrifice of His Son to redeem me.)
- E – Eternal life – living eternally committed to Him, both here on this earth and in heaven forevermore.)

Have each woman expound on their answer for 3 – 5 minutes.

More Program Ideas for special Women’s Ministry programs

Submitted by Carol Hensrud, Bethel FLC, Grafton, ND

SPRING TEA: “Growing in the Garden of God”

Plan a tea with the theme “Gardening God’s Way” based on John 15 – the vine and the branches. “I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener” and Gen 2:8 “Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east.” Could promote it as a “Mother-Daughter” event, with all ages taking part. Recruit one or two of your own women to share their expertise on gardening, and relate it to our spiritual life – preparing the soil, planting, weeding, pruning, harvesting. First have the speaker giving a devotional based on Scriptures listed above; then demonstrate how to plant a patio flower pot. Discuss soil, fertilizer, types of flowers, etc. Take questions from the group. When the pot has been planted, have a drawing to see who gets to take it home! You may wish to include other door prizes for young girls to grandmas!

Decorate the tables with potted geraniums, china cups and saucers, bright spring-colored napkins, and individual petit-fours. A traditional English Tea menu of cucumber sandwiches, ribbon sandwiches, strawberries dipped in chocolate, and a small cookie may be served.

Musicals selections for the program may include the hymn, “Thy Word is Like a Garden, Lord” and/or the piano duet entitled “Tea for Two.”

Invitations can be sent/given to all the women of the church encouraging them to come and bring a friend. Tickets could be sold two for the price of one.

Yawn! A Board Party

*Invitation taken from the book “Creative Hospitality” by Marlene D. LeFever.

Invitation:

“Come on and be ‘board’ with us”

We’re planning an evening of good, old-fashioned board games.

Come and meet our church “at play”.

When: _____

Where: _____

Food Sure! We’re making “whatever soup”

We’ll have the stock simmering and you

Bring something to add to the stock. The soup will

Be what you make it.

Or, bring something to add to the lettuce.

We promise you won’t be bored!

Various Program Idea Starters

Determine your focus as a WMF. The number one focus should be Christ and the relationship of your ladies to Him. Bible study is the way to begin. The other programs, projects will grow from that. If you do nothing else in your church begin with Bible study and prayer. As the ladies grow in their relationship with the Lord encourage unity with the group by involving them all in various programs and opportunities.

Is there a Senior complex in your area. Check out to see if there would be any interest in a Bible study held there. Publicize the study, time and location. If possible your ladies could contribute a snack or coffee favor for after or during the study.

Do you have young mothers to offer a Bible study time for? Get some women together and offer babysitting so the mothers can fully focus on God's Word.

How about a prayer breakfast? Have the ladies gather around breakfast and then close with a time of prayer

How can you reach the children of your community? Can you have a monthly (or how ever often you deem you can handle in your schedule) Kids club. It is easy to work with if you get VBS material to use as your base.

Are there organizations either locally or nationally that you could provide things for such as: Food pantry needing helpers or food to stock their shelves. Quilts for the homeless shelters. We also have our mission organizations that can use your help. The cost of postage to ship overseas is high but it is well worth it at the mission. Brazil has the Miriam Home, which can use several different supplies. Alaska has need of quilts to hand out as well as cookie mixes when The Net is open in the spring.

Is your group interested in a cookbook? Pulling together recipes and organizing them and then publishing them into a book and handing out or selling them to raise funds for missions or a missions project.

How about a craft night? To create crafts, cards, etc. for the church or personally. Time spent together creating things. Maybe making new Christmas ornaments for the trees at church.

How about hosting activities that can help the community out such as, blood drives, financial seminars, Veterans' Day celebrations, etc?

Congregational gatherings to build fellowship and unity in your church might be, Valentine's Day, Easter Breakfast, Fun supper (Mystery Supper), Fall supper, Christmas Dinner.

Practice a Jesus heart, be available. Always be willing and able to help with whatever is needed, no matter how last minute.

Is there a Prison ministry or a women's shelter that you could make hand-made cards to give to women in prison so they can use them to write loved ones. We've collected stationery, pens and stamps to send to women in prison as well. We've also had blanket parties where we do the fleece tied blankets and bring them to battered women's shelters so that children that are brought in have something they can keep and comfort them. Take some time to pray for those who will be receiving the gifts that you present to them.

Anyone interested in ministry to women could be involved in planning activities. Ladies with special talents could be asked to do demonstrations on the things they do. Gatherings can be planned that would encourage the ladies in various ways. Here are a few suggestions but don't be limited to just these:

- Setting up a mentoring program matching mature ladies with a younger one with the idea of mutual teaching?
- How about a quilting group that gathers to make quilts for missions or community needs?
- A card making group to make cards that can be given to prison ministry or women's shelters?
- A sewing group could make toys and/or simple clothing for missions or women's shelters, depending on the needs expressed by these missions?
- You could also have a visitation ministry for the elderly and/or shut-ins in your congregation to show the love of Christ.
- How about a Young Mother's study, a Girls Night Out, or a Women's Retreat (one day or a full weekend)?

What other ideas could you come up with that would minister to your ladies? You can always ask the ladies what they are interested in. There is also the opportunity to get involved through the Samaritan Shoe Boxes and Christmas Tree Ministries (take a need off of an ornament hung on a tree) or other legitimate organizations.

Ecclesiastes Program Ideas

When planning your WMF activity calendar for the year, please consider using all or some of the following ideas from Ecclesiastes:

A time to be born: Presenting newborns with Cradle Roll Packets.

A time to die: Serving a light lunch or meal at funerals.

A time to plant: Planting flowers on the church property or nursing home.

A time to heal: Honoring those who have served in the military.

A time to tear down: Visiting shut-ins.

A time to build: Partnering those in your congregation 18 years old and younger with an adult who will pray for and spend time with them.

A time to weep: Abortion. Be informed and inform on National or State issues that Christians should be aware of that could influence politicians to vote according to God's laws.

A time to laugh: A gathering to share a video from Ken Davis or other Christian comedian. Popcorn could be served and entire families could be invited.

A time to mourn: Visit with those who have lost loved ones and support them however needed.

A time to gather stones: Raking leaves in the church lawn and other collaborative efforts.

A time to gather them: Prepare a list of needs for the kitchen with a sign-up sheet for individuals to purchase.

A time to embrace: We had a head usher who insisted on hugging everyone. It took a while to get used to, but when he moved, we all miss this sincere gesture.

A time to search: Searching for verses to comfort a person going through a particularly hard time.

A time to throw away: Purging the church kitchen and storage areas.

A time to mend: Making quilts.

A time to love: Host a Valentine's dinner honoring couples who have been married 50 years and more.

DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE

There is a movement of prayer sweeping across the land that could be the prelude to a season of spiritual awakening. This suggested service may be used for a format for women of the AFLC to join in united prayer on at least one dedicated occasion.

The following is one model for an hour of prayer:

1. PRELUDE (10 minutes)

Scripture – Psalm 138, 146, 148 or 150

Worship in Song – Choose a hymn like “We Praise Thee, O God,” or a couple of praise choruses, that addresses the Lord personally.

Prayer – for Himself, Who He is and what He has done.

2. PREPARATION (15 minutes)

Scripture – Psalm 51:1-17

Prayer – Searching the heart, confession of sins and personal revival.

3. PETITION (20 minutes)

Scripture – Matthew 7:7-11

The Lord’s Prayer

Worship in Song – “Sweet Hour of Prayer” or another favorite prayer hymn.

Prayer – specific requests

- World evangelization
- Our nation
- Our local congregation and the AFLC
- Personal ministries

4. POSTLUDE (15 minutes)

Scripture – Psalm 100, Philippians 4:4-7

Worship in Song – “Thanks to God” or another hymn that expresses our gratitude to the Lord.

Prayer – thanksgiving

- For answered prayer
- For the family of God
- For the work of God around the world

NOTE: Involve as many women as possible...a leader, Scripture readers, etc. You may decide to open each section of the service for free prayer or to assign certain individuals for specific prayer topics. A combination approach is also possible, with at least one person prepared in advance for each section plus opening the time for free prayer by any who want to participate. Finally, try to follow the time divisions as carefully as possible so that you are finished in one hour. Remember most of all that a Day of Prayer should not just be another program but a step in the process of pressing on from where we are now to where God wants us to be, from what we are now to what God wants us to become.

PRAYER PARTNERS

By Lori Willard

GIRLFRIENDS UNITE!

Here are few ways that you can encourage prayer amongst the ladies in your church:



At the Altar – Our congregation was blessed when God called two men from our church into ministry. My heart was burdened for those men and their families! Our church family had a responsibility to pray for them during those years! Our pastor’s wife agreed with me because she also had a strong sense to begin a regular prayer time at the church. Together, we met at the altar every Saturday morning with no agenda and no prayer list – just seeking God’s heart – what He wanted us to pray about. As we were quiet for several minutes, the Lord directed our prayer time as our petitions went back and forth between us. Although we verbally announced the prayer time to other women, we had few others attend. Some would come for a short season and not return. Others would come only once. The amount of people did not seem to matter. God made it clear that He wanted us to be consistent as He showed us answers to prayer during that very first week and beyond! God is so gracious to us! If we will humbly answer His call to pray, He will work in and through us! Sometimes the Lord would make US the answer to our prayers! Even though I have moved and am not able to attend that church anymore, guess who I call on when I KNOW I need someone who will PRAY?!

Walking – Women love to walk for exercise! Why not incorporate prayer into your times of walking?! You can walk in good weather or bad. Outdoors can provide wonderful fresh air and sunrises. Inside your church can provide a warm, dry spot for those stormy or rainy days. Regardless, grab a walking partner and start praying as you stroll together.

Coffee/Tea Time – Invite a girlfriend or two who would love to come to your house and pray.

Sitting in Traffic – We do that a lot where I come from! How about taking the time to pray with those in the car? Alone? How about praying by yourself? Make the most of the time given to us.

As the Lord provides us grace, we are to be: united, joyful, in prayer, focusing on the Word, and sensitive to others’ needs – we, quite possibly, may be the answer to their need – according to Philippians 4. What better way to unite together, as sisters, than in and through prayer?!

Hebrews 10:24-25 NKJV

“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”



Christmas Gathering Meeting

By Barb Strand

As many of you know, there are 11 Bible lessons in our Bible study book, so in our local WMF, we use December for our Christmas gathering (party). One member usually volunteers to host the Christmas event, and it is an excellent opportunity to invite women of the congregation that don't usually attend the WMF meeting and others in the community to come and join the Christmas festivities, and celebrate our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Often times we have mothers, sisters, special friends, and others that are included in the gathering.

Everyone who wishes brings a dish to share...often their Christmas baking specialty, special dips or sauces, or a new recipe they are anxiously waiting to try out...there is usually an abundance of food. We have started to bring recipes to share too...especially if it is something new we have tried.

Also we bring something to share...a reading, a portion of scripture that has spoken to us during the Christmas season, or sing a favorite Christmas carol, or maybe a prayer request. Maybe the words of a Christmas hymn have spoken to you during the advent season, and what a wonderful time to be able to share with a body of believers...all women.



For Members In Retirement Homes Or Nursing Homes

By Barb Strand

Keep in touch with the member of your WMF...good way to include these ladies is to make sure they receive the Bible study, so they can be doing it at the same time your local WMF does.

Have an officer or friend of the member in a facility contact the WMF member in the facility and see if she would like to host a monthly WMF meeting.

- They may be able to secure a room for the meeting if given enough lead time.
- Allow the hostess to pick the date and time for the meeting in her new facility.
- Offer to have other members bring the lunch, but allow the hostess to do so if she wishes.
- Be sure and announce the change in venue for the monthly meeting – maybe a couple of months ahead so members can make arrangements to attend.

Make a valid attempt to attend the WMF meeting of the member in the facility.

Allow enough time to see the new home of the member.

Be sure to pray for the member in a new setting.

Send minutes of the monthly business meeting to members if they desire.

TEA PARTY

Karen Sletten, Bethel Lutheran W.M.F

Our minister's wife had a "Tea Party" for an elderly member who will soon be leaving for an assisted living home. She made it seem as old fashioned as possible. The tables were covered with yellow, brown and green plastic tablecloths, down the center was old beautiful cream pitchers-- fine china ones. Each place setting had quaint dainty napkins with a spoon and fork. Each place setting had a beautiful (and fragile) cup and saucer. Many of us had brought our best ones from home so each setting was unique.

The food was served from a serving table and the tea, coffee, punch and lemonade were served at their tables. This way they only had to carry the plate and the tea cups and saucers stayed at the table so there was no worry of dropping or spilling of the fragile borrowed china. The hot water for tea was in a big olden teapot that came from Holland some years ago. This was on display but tea was served at the table for those who wanted it.

The program (while everyone was sitting down) consisted of a devotional, a solo, and some poems-Helen Steiner Rice type. Since the honoree was a retired teacher and several former students were in attendance, they gave interesting stories about their remembrance of being in the third grade room with her as their teacher.

The afternoon was delightful!!! Many of our younger gals had never actually been to a real Tea Party.



GROWING YOUR GROUP

By Lynn Wellumson

I wish there were five steps to building numbers in your local WMF group. There is no magical formula that works in any group, let alone every group.

Obviously, and foremost, make it a matter of prayer. Pray that God would lay it on women's hearts a desire to be involved in mission work at home and abroad. Pray that Biblically sound AFLC printed materials would be a desire that lay on their hearts.

Every WMF group has to evaluate and determine the best time and date for the ladies involved in their church. Whether it is morning, afternoon, or evening, be careful of the time. Meetings that seem to have no purpose or drone on are a drain on everyone.

With God's help, make your group a safe place to discuss hardships or heartaches. Burdens shared and genuine empathy are so helpful and we fulfill scripture concerning bearing one another's burdens.

Perhaps, someone could be hired from the community to babysit young children while moms attend WMF. Is there a community service project your area needs?

One idea is for each woman involved in a local WMF to be a friend/mentor to a fellow church attendee. This involves praying for, encouraging, and urging participation at the local WMF level. If every member that currently attends the local WMF meeting could encourage and invite one other woman, that would be 100% growth. PRAY, first and foremost, that God would lay on that person's heart a desire to see His kingdom furthered and allow them to be a part of that process.



GIGGLES Girls Group

By Chanyce Dahl

WMF is a special and unique aspect of the AFLC. It exists to minister to women, support missionaries and serve others. The opportunities for positively impacting your local church, community and the world are endless. As we consider the command to “Go into all the world and make disciples of all nations.” Mark 16:15a, it makes one wonder if the women of our AFLC are fully embracing the simplicity of WMF in order to do our part.

As our Evening WMF attendance numbers began to decline, we prayed for a solution to why women were not compelled to be a part of such an integral part of the church. The Lord put the idea of GIGGLES on my heart.

GIGGLES stands for Growing In God through Games, Lessons, Experience and Service. This is a junior WMF program aimed to mentor the next generation. Girls ages eight to twelve are invited to attend our monthly WMF meeting. We encourage their moms to attend as well. We want to give them a taste of the fellowship and the ministry opportunities along with the joy that comes with being an active member of the church body.

During our WMF Bible Study, the GIGGLES girls have their own Bible study led by one of the moms or a high school mentor. They attend and take part in our business meeting. Other things that they do throughout the year are lessons received from women in our church such as baking, embroidery, card making, etc. We also encourage them to take part in service projects such as missionary cards, shopping for Christmas gifts for Angel Tree, Christmas caroling to our elderly in the church and serving on Sunday mornings during coffee hour.

The young girls are so enthusiastic and want to learn and serve. They breathed life into our WMF group and blessed so many through their service. Hopefully their experiences and knowledge gained through their time involved with WMF make a lasting impact in their walk with the Lord and their desire to be active members of WMF one day.

Joseph – A Tender Portrait at Christmastime

By Amy Engwall

Have you ever felt like your life has been unremarkably ordinary and dotted with failure? Then take heart, dear one, for you are in good company. Scripture paints a beautiful portrait of an extraordinary man named Joseph who probably did not see himself as anything particularly special. He was born into a family in Israel at a time of spiritual drought; a virtual silence from God that had lasted four hundred years. Joseph would have the privilege of witnessing God shatter His silence. God was preparing to send His only begotten Son in the form of a helpless babe to be light in the darkness, the hope of salvation to a lost and dying world. In his wildest dreams Joseph would never have imagined himself in the epi-center of this fulfillment of prophecy. As God unfolded His will in His high and mysterious ways, He included Joseph, a simple laborer and crafter of wood. While at times uncontrollable circumstances must have made Joseph feel like a complete failure, God chose him because of something he did have control over - his faith and his character.

In Matthew 1:18-19 we see Joseph's humility.

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her, desired to put her away secretly."

These verses tell us that Mary and Joseph were betrothed. In those days a betrothal was like an engagement period, but it was legally binding. A betrothal could be broken only by a legal transaction, much like a divorce. The betrothal lasted about twelve months and during that time the groom would busy himself preparing a home for his bride which was typically attached to his family's home. The bride and her family were busy preparing wedding clothing. When the father of the bridegroom determined the newlyweds' home was finished and the time was right, he would look at his son and say, "Go and get your bride."

It was during this time of great anticipation, preparation, and hope for the future that Mary was found to be with child. Can you imagine how devastating this news would have been to Joseph? He knew he wasn't the father of the child. What an embarrassing and humiliating turn of events! Joseph surely would have initially felt betrayed. But Matthew tells us that Joseph was a righteous man. Matthew also indicates that Joseph was a very humble man. Humility is the grace to not think of ourselves more highly than we ought to, but to honor others above ourselves. A betrothal could be terminated on the grounds of adultery and the punishment was sometimes death by stoning. Matthew 1:19 gives us a glimpse into the tenderness of Joseph's heart when it reveals that he planned to send Mary away secretly. No revenge, no spite, just kind humility – a reflection of the character God looked for in the man who was to be the earthly father of Jesus.

While Joseph didn't initially embrace Mary's pregnancy claim that 'the Holy Spirit did it', God didn't leave Joseph to wonder for long if Mary was the most imaginative storyteller on the planet. God sent a special angelic messenger to Joseph to confirm Mary's outlandish explanation.

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"But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins." Matthew 1:20 – 21

The angel was intentional in assuring Joseph's upcoming role as Jesus' earthly father by

telling him that he would name the child, a distinct honor reserved for the father.

We get another confirmation of Joseph's humility as the story continues in Matthew 1:24-25.

“And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took her as his wife, and kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.”

Obedience, humility, and patience walk side by side. Joseph immediately followed through with what the angel of the Lord commanded. He took Mary as his wife. He didn't demand his rights as a husband but protected Mary and kept her a virgin until she gave birth to Jesus.

If a mere human had written this story, it is at this point that the highly favored couple would become famous, pampered and protected from all earthly hardship. God, in His infinite wisdom, orchestrated a much different turn of events.

In Luke 2:4-7 we see the Joseph's humanness.

“And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, in order to register, along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was with child. And it came about that while they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”

Joseph had no control over the political decisions of his day. He had no special authority, no world-wide clout. He was helpless to change the situation when Caesar Augustus decided to take a census of the whole inhabited world. He was forced to travel nearly eighty miles to Bethlehem with his very pregnant wife. If Joseph and Mary traveled with a caravan and Mary rode on a donkey (which the Bible never verifies) then the journey probably took four days. Ladies, can you imagine being almost nine months pregnant riding a donkey twenty miles a day for four days straight? We can expect that upon arrival Joseph hustled to the “Bethlehem Inn” to claim the room that God had surely mercifully and miraculously reserved for them. As Mary's warning of “the contractions are coming harder and faster” rang in his ears, the cold, uncaring pronouncement of “NO VACANCY” from the innkeeper must have hit Joseph like a kick to the stomach. The Bible has already assured us of Joseph's care and protection for Mary. How he must have agonized over not being able to find a suitable place to stay. It was obvious that the baby's birth was imminent. So, they found shelter in what surely was the stable carved out of rock in the Bethlehem hillside housing the spotless, unblemished lambs that were to be taken to Jerusalem and sacrificed for the sins of the people. What must have been going through Joseph's mind? Perhaps something like this,

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“God trusted me to take care of the woman who is carrying the Savior of the world and I have failed. Horribly! Completely! Epicly!” Joseph was powerless to provide Mary with even basic essentials like a bed or even her mother. Instead, they were surrounded by smelly animals. How could he have known that this stable was the perfect place for the Lamb of God to be born? It must have hurt Joseph, the skilled carpenter, to lay this precious newborn baby boy, the Son of God, not in a cradle lovingly made by his own hands, but in a dirty feeding trough. Nothing was going the way Joseph had hoped, yet all of heaven knew God's plan was playing out perfectly. While Joseph was berating himself for this “epic fail” God was

writing a breathtakingly beautiful script that humanity would embrace and celebrate into all of eternity. Sometimes God uses us most remarkably when we feel like we are failing most miserably.

In Matthew 13:54-55a we see Joseph's honorability.

“And coming to His home town Jesus began teaching them in their synagogue, so that they became astonished, and said, “Where did this man get this wisdom, and these miraculous powers? Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not His mother called Mary.....”

Joseph honored Jesus by raising Him as if He was his own. All of Nazareth recognized Jesus as the son of Joseph the carpenter, even years after Jesus was grown. Even though Jesus did not share one drop of blood with Joseph, it is Joseph's genealogy that is recorded in Matthew 1. Both Mary and Joseph descended from David but it is Joseph who descended from David's son Solomon while Mary was descended from David's son, Nathan. The right to royalty came through Solomon who was David's heir to the throne. So, it is through Joseph's adoption of Jesus that He was granted the legal right to be the King of the Jews. If Jesus had been the son of Mary without her being the legal wife of Joseph, His royal claim would have been rejected. As the virgin-born son of Mary, Jesus had no legal right to the throne. As the adopted son of Joseph He had every right. Joseph would be lost to history if his greatest accomplishment had not been that of stepdad to Jesus, our Messiah.

A look at the life of Joseph gives us hope that God treasures those who are obedient to Him, and He will use those who trust in Him even if circumstances seem to indicate differently. The few verses that give us insight into the character of Joseph reveal a man with a heart full of love, integrity, and tenderness. This Christmas season when you see a nativity scene, notice Mary's humble husband by the manger looking down in wonder and experience with him the miracle of being invited to embrace Emmanuel, God with us.

For a beautiful and poignant addition to this talk, you can play by audio or video “Joseph’s Song” by Michael Card found on YouTube.

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Our Church's WMF Journey

Sent in by Betsy VanMuenster

The WMF ladies' group has been functioning at our church since our church's beginning. According to the WMF records here their opening offering was in January 1988. The group has been faithfully meeting on a monthly basis. Sometimes not very many ladies come and sometimes a lot of ladies come.

A couple of years ago, at our church's annual meeting, the WMF leader and treasurer suggested that the WMF group combine with the quilting/sewing group, due to low attendance at the WMF meetings.

This suggestion was a good one and that's what happened. The two groups combined forces!

Here's how we do it: we gather on the 3rd Saturday of every month, at 9 am for sewing. At 11:30 we stop to have devotions, review of our missionaries and what is currently going on with them, and we end with prayer, always lifting up to God the work of our missionaries and their needs. A donation is collected from this group, (as well as a ladies Bible study group, who also donates to the quilting/WMF group. The church is also very generous to the WMF, giving to us as well). Afterwards we have lunch break then we get back to our sewing!!

We have received many donations of sewing machines, yards and yards of fabric, thread, sewing utensils, etc. We always have a goal in mind, sewing quilts, blankets, bags, etc. to send to our missionaries and their work. So far, we have sent quilts to Brazil at least twice, Alaska, and Mexico. We made 40 book bags for our Kids Club out of donated old jeans and jean material. We are currently making lap quilts for our local nursing home. (One of our quilting/WMF members was temporarily in that nursing home). We make fleece tie blankets for our graduating seniors!! We have many baby blankets that have been made by our group or donated that we are looking for a place to donate to.

On each blanket that we make, we always include God's Word somewhere on that blanket to remind the recipient of our intentions.

When we have a project ready to send off, we present it to the church and our pastor always prays over it. We also, pray for the recipient of each completed blanket, bag, Christmas box, that God would use it and His Word to draw that person to Him. That God would bless this person and their family.

We recently decided to name our quilting/WMF group. During our devotion time we had discussed 2 Timothy 3:1-6. In this scripture, Paul is talking about godlessness in the last days, people who are lovers of themselves, lovers of pleasure, rather than lovers of God, "having a form of godliness, but denying its power." Paul then goes on to say that "they are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women..." We named these women: www (short for weak willed women)! We knew that we didn't want to be one of these www (weak willed women), but instead we wanted to be Women of the Word (WoW)! So, we named our group "WoW."

Our WoW group is such a fun time of fellowship, encouragement, and love and as an added benefit, we have children who join us on occasion. They always brighten our day and help with the work.

We hope this little story of our church's WMF group will be an encouragement to each of you, to continue in your work for the Lord, "because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." 1 Corinthians 1:58

WMF Camp Gathering

By Margie Lee

For the 3rd year, the Western North Dakota/ Eastern Montana family camp included a special WMF gathering. This year's event was hosted by Emmanuel Free Lutheran from Williston, ND. Around 30 ladies, young and old, attended our WMF Lemonade/Coffee.



Everyone received a devotional booklet entitled "Lemonade, when life gives you lemons...." which contained scripture, recipes, craft, and game ideas.



An icebreaker included everyone writing an answer to complete the sentence "When life gives you lemons..."

We also played a game called "Hot Lemon" (similar to hot potato) and passed our "artificial lemon" to music about lemons. When the music abruptly stopped, the gal holding the lemon shared an answer to a "table talk" style question and also won a door prize. All the young ladies who didn't "win", were also given a door prize.

Lime bars, lemon bars, lemon cookies, and CHOCOLATE brownies were served along with coffee and fresh squeezed lemonade. The gathering concluded with Jeanie Sheldon sharing from a book she was reading about a missionary. It was informal, fun, lasted about an hour, and enjoyed by all ages. A Thrivent card was used and that covered all of our expenses. I would recommend other family camps include a special gathering time for your WMF. It is a great opportunity to introduce our young ladies to our faith, fellowship, and service as future WMF members.



IDEAS that WORK

By Mary Pollestad

Let me encourage each women's group to always have one special event that women enjoy and one in which they can invite their friends to come along to. Every woman likes to bring their friends to something just so they can be together. This also enables the Christian gal to bring her non-Christian friend to a non-threatening event in the church. This has really proven to be a wonderful time of outreach. Also, it helps the younger gals to have a special time with their Christian Friends. In this busy world women



don't all have the time to get together. What could be a more wonderful way to get together than at the church around a Christ centered event. It proves to be a wonderful time for all! Always provide childcare for those single gals with children. This way the money issue of a sitter is not a stumbling block to stand in the way for the young mothers. Don't forget the older generation. They enjoy being there too. It is a wonderful time for them to be around the younger gals. Hope this is an idea that you can possibly use and that all can enjoy.

Creative Program Starter Ideas

Ideas gathered at the Sunnyside Free Lutheran Fall Tea September 2021

Theme: John 3:16, "For God so Loved"

Setting: This could be done at church and out into the community.

Activities: gardens/spring or fall

Spiritual Growth: sharing with others

Learning Opportunity: God is love and we should love.

Other:

Theme: John 3:16

Setting: A church or private home.

Activities: Helping others

Spiritual Growth: Bible study.

Learning Opportunity: Emphasis that we are not alone, God is with us.

Other:

Theme: Hebrews 12:1

Setting: A race of running but have the clothing of a woman NOT dressed for running.

Activities: A race of getting "dressed up" and then trying to run with all the material things hindering your performance of "racing."

Spiritual Growth: Not needing material things or image to be the person you can be.

Learning Opportunity: Open your heart and loving who you are, who is with you and putting your faith in God.

Other: Being able to help others by an example of being true.

Theme: 1 Thessalonians 4:8

Setting: At church.

Activities: Use Scripture. Connect -share needs and prayer

Spiritual Growth: Encourage through Scripture and memorizing Scripture.

Learning Opportunity: Through CD's, Radio Broadcast, mixing with people of different cultures.

Other:

Theme: Unto us a child is born – Mary's response to God that needs to be us.

Setting: A Christmas Tea

Activities: Demonstrations of Lefsa making, knitting, other Christmas crafts. Have a giving tree, bring in gifts for Angel tree, nursing home, group home

Spiritual Growth: Use our gifts to share. Keeping the meaning of Christ in Christmas.

Learning Opportunity: Serving, giving, sharing, honoring God.

Other:

Theme: Hebrews 12:1

Setting: Addiction

Activities: Self-Awareness-Finding out if each individual has or is prone to addiction

Spiritual Growth: Living an addiction controlled life.

Learning Opportunity: Find Scriptures that pertaining to addiction and how to turn it over to God. Learning you are not fighting alone

Other:

Theme: Proverbs 19:17-Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord and he will repay him for his deed.

Setting: Meet at the church.

Activities: Gathering items to give to the needy such as clothing, etc.

Spiritual Growth: The joy of giving.

Learning Opportunity: Putting a smile on someone else's face. Learning it's much better to give than to receive.

Other:

Theme: Luke 18:16

Setting: A Park.

Activities: Games, balloons, rock painting, petting zoo

Spiritual Growth: Taking care of nature and animals.

Learning Opportunity: Taking care of God's land and creatures.

Other:

