

May 2008

# Women of HOPE



*"Sow for yourselves  
righteousness, reap the  
fruit of unfailing love,  
and break up your  
unplowed ground; for it  
is time to seek the  
LORD until he comes  
and showers  
righteousness on you."*

**Hosea 10:12**



Dear Women of Hope,

With the trees and bushes beginning to bud and unfurl their leaves, I am again urging (okay, nagging) my husband to dig up a bush in our front yard that I have dubbed "our ugly bush." The poor thing has been struggling the last few years due to our winter weather conditions and my attempts at pruning. However, a few days ago, as I passed the bush once again, I was reminded of the parable of the fig tree in Luke 13:6-9. The parable tells of a fig tree a man planted in his vineyard, but it had not produced any fruit for three years. He told the vineyard caretaker to cut it down. The caretaker said to leave it alone for one more year, and he would dig around it and fertilize it. Then, if there was no fruit, he would cut it down.

Two thoughts became apparent to me. From the parable in Luke, we learn of three ingredients God gives us to fulfill our calling, enabling us to carry out the unique part he wants each of us to play in his plans and purposes. Those ingredients are God's grace (the fertilizer), God's truth (digging around the tree), and God's time (give it one more year). Secondly, my ugly bush was trying to be the best bush it could be under harsh conditions, fulfilling its calling to be the bush God created it to be. Are you like the fig tree or my ugly bush, needing the ingredients of grace, truth and time to help you discern and fulfill God's calling for your life?

**Grace** is what enables us to carry out God's call upon our lives (1 Peter 4:10). Our calling is not based on our own ability, our level of education, our good works or our special status. When those things change or end, grace steps in. Grace is God's unconditional love and acceptance. It can't be earned, nor is it deserved.

**Truth** describes reality – how things really are. It keeps us from repeating sinful choices and patterns. Jesus tells us he is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). However, we need a combination of both grace and truth – not just one or the other. John 1:14 says, "We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

**Time** is the last ingredient. God's time is so often different from mine! 1 Peter 3:8 tells us that "with the Lord a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years are like a day." The next verse assures us that God is not slow in keeping his promises.

As you pursue the calling God has on your life, you can expect changes in your plans, your perspective and your personhood. When God has spoken to me about his calling on my life, it seemed like that message was everywhere – in each sermon I heard, in my Bible study lesson, or in my conversation with a friend. Once I discern it, God wants me to obey and "just do it."

Ladies, don't let your inabilities and insecurities dissuade you from your calling. Remember God gives us his grace, truth and time. View God's call on your life as an opportunity to watch God work in you and through you.

In HIS grace, Jaci

## Retreat from the Norm

A small group ministry that plans retreats for women is stepping out. A group of four



women – Sara Anderson, Larci Conner, Danielle Johnson and Delite Lester – have prayerfully laid the groundwork for this

opportunity. The retreat is designed for eight women to spend a weekend away at a comfortable Victorian farmhouse about 30 minutes from Hope. The weekend is all-inclusive, including inspiring teaching from God's Word, worship, prayer and rest in His presence. For more information, contact Delite at [c.lester@mchsi.com](mailto:c.lester@mchsi.com).

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## SALT

Sisters All Learning Together

Tuesdays (ongoing)  
6:30 - 8:00 am, The Bridge at Hope  
**NEW: Starting May 6 - SALT II**  
Tuesdays (ongoing)  
5:00 - 6:15 pm, Rm 128

Are you looking to connect with ordinary women who yearn for God's Word?

SALT offers a safe, welcoming environment with large group discussions. If you would like to begin and/or end your day with study, prayer and a time of connection with other women of all ages, SALT is a great place for you.

Sorry, childcare is not available.  
For more information,  
please contact Lisa Anderson at 577-9157.



## T-shirts for Sale!

Just Give Me Jesus t-shirts  
(with the logo on front)  
are available  
to purchase for \$6.

Wear them to the store!

Wear them everywhere!

To purchase a t-shirt, contact Mary Wood at 401-4942 (H) or 707-7881 (C).

## Kristi's Korner

As I was thinking about what I wanted to write, a certain passage continued to land on my heart ~ Isaiah 43:18-19. I kept pushing it aside, because it wasn't what I wanted to write. Been there? When I finally stopped and listened, I discovered the beauty and the promise God was waiting to share.

Many of us have wounds in our past. Woven in with the wounds we also see the places God has shown himself through healing and comfort. *"But forget all that ~ it is nothing compared to what I am going to do. For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you see it? (Isaiah 43:18)* While I don't believe God is telling us to forget the past (we can't), I find that he is asking us to not dwell on it. For if our focus is on the past (bad or good; wounds or healing), we will miss what he has in store for us. God has brought me wondrous healing, comfort and joy. Yes, those are to be celebrated, but should not be a stopping point. If I will make the choice to look ahead, He has already begun something new for me.

Is looking ahead easy? Well, looking might be easy, but moving into the new and unknown can be difficult. It brings challenges mixed with the blessings. We may even feel at times that the "new" God has for us is impossible. *"I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland."* (Isaiah 43:19) Think about a situation God is asking you to face. Can you alone make the path? Can you bring renewal to the dryness? God can, but for him to do this means he needs to bring us to the impasse, the wall we can't climb. This goes directly against our human nature and our own devises. If we put our trust in the Lord, it is at that point that our faith is awakened and we are able to put our trust in him to do the impossible.

If we allow ourselves to be led on the path through the rough patches or carried in the river through the wasteland, we may not know exactly where God is taking us, but we can trust that it will be good. God's love is everlasting.

*Kristi has been an active member of Hope for seven years. She has faithfully volunteered many times in various Adult Ministry roles and served at Missions Riverside and Juarez. She currently serves on the Service Arm of the Women's Ministry Leadership Team.*



Tuesdays, June 10 - Aug. 26  
(Will not meet July 14-27)  
9:15-11:30 am, Room 130

Do you believe God, or simply believe *in* him? Originating from a concept in Isaiah 43:10, Bible teacher Beth Moore leads participants through a 10-session study of the lives of Abraham and others — examples of people who believed God. Through this study, challenge yourself to take God at his word, believe his promises and, as a result, live fuller lives. Please pre-register at [www.hopewdm.org/women](http://www.hopewdm.org/women).

Cost: \$20



## Paying Attention

by Delite Lester

Isaiah 55:6 advises, "Seek the Lord while He may be found; call on him while he is near." I squirm at times when I stop to consider how few steps I take to seek him compared to my dependence on his love drawing me to him. I've begun to learn that I need to pay attention and watch for the opportunities he brings me, just as much as "making" the opportunity through the disciplines such as quiet time in his Word. Paying attention is turning out to be exciting and fruitful. It means less auto-pilot living and more Spirit-led adventures. He has a way of getting our attention, but we also need to pay attention.

*Delite Lester has been an active member of Hope for close to six years and faithfully volunteers for Alpha as well as the Prayer Ministry. She leads God's Girls on Mondays, 9:30-11:00 am. Delite's favorite food is pizza.*

## Position: Mom Job description:

Long-term team players needed for challenging permanent work in an often-chaotic environment. Candidates must possess excellent communication and organizational skills and be willing to work variable hours, which will include evenings and weekends and frequent 24-hour shifts on call. Some overnight travel required, including trips to primitive camping sites on rainy weekends and endless sports tournaments in far away cities. Travel expenses not reimbursed. Extensive courier duties also required. **Responsibilities:** For the rest of your life - must be willing to be hated at least temporarily, until someone needs \$5 to go skating. Must be willing to bite tongue repeatedly. Also, must possess the physical stamina of a pack mule and be able to go from zero to 60 mph in three seconds flat in case, this time, the screams from the backyard are not someone just crying wolf. Must be willing to face stimulating technical challenges, such as small gadget repair, mysteriously sluggish toilets and stuck zippers. Must screen phone calls, maintain calendars and coordinate production of multiple homework projects. Must have ability to plan and organize social gatherings for clients of all ages and mental outlooks. Must be willing to be indispensable one minute, an embarrassment the next. Must handle assembly and product safety testing of a half million cheap, plastic toys and battery operated devices. Must always hope for the best but be prepared for the worst. Must assume final, complete accountability for the quality of the end product. Responsibilities include floor maintenance and janitorial work throughout the facility. **Possibility for advancement:** Virtually none. Your job is to remain in the same position for years, without complaining, constantly retraining and updating your skills, so that those in your charge can ultimately surpass you. **Previous experience:** None required, unfortunately. On-the-job training offered on a continually exhausting basis. **Wages and compensation:** You pay them, offering frequent raises and bonuses. A balloon payment is due when they turn 18 because of the assumption that college will help them become financially independent. When you die, you give them whatever is left. The oddest thing about this reverse-salary scheme is that you actually enjoy it and wish you could only do more. **Benefits:** While no health or dental insurance, no pension, no tuition reimbursement, no paid holidays and no stock options are offered, job supplies limitless opportunities for personal growth and free hugs for life if you play your cards right.

*This was taken from an article by Mary Southerland.*

# Women of Hope

*Living:* When in community with other Christian women, we are able to encourage one another, provide support, and share life as we grow together in Christ.

*Learning:* Through prayer, Bible study, education, and discipleship, women learn to reflect Christ daily in their words, thought, actions, and relationships.

*Growing:* God has called us to fulfill Jesus' vision of reaching out, showing his love, and sharing the Good News with those around us.

## THE MISSION:

*Living, learning, growing together in Christ.*

## THE VISION:

*To be a Holy Spirit-directed, Christ-centered and Bible-saturated community of women.*

## WOMEN'S MINISTRY TEAMS

### **SERVICE TEAM LEADER - Jennifer Browne ([jennifer@benefitssourceinc.com](mailto:jennifer@benefitssourceinc.com))**

Discover opportunities in two key areas to use your strengths and skills to serve and build up Christ's community of women.

**Missions Team Leader** - Kaylene Steele ([kaylens@childserve.org](mailto:kaylens@childserve.org))

**Shepherding (Care) Team Leader** - Jackie Joens ([jrj1430@yahoo.com](mailto:jrj1430@yahoo.com))

### **OUTREACH TEAM LEADER - Trish Toma-Lark ([trish.toma-lark@hopewdm.org](mailto:trish.toma-lark@hopewdm.org))**

Through events, retreats, and conferences be inspired to strengthen your faith and enjoy fellowship.

### **PRAYER TEAM LEADER - Jody Herman ([jodyherman@msn.com](mailto:jodyherman@msn.com))**

Guiding women in their personal relationship with Jesus through prayer.

### **CONNECTIONS TEAM LEADER - Jennifer Webster ([doakweb@gmail.com](mailto:doakweb@gmail.com))**

Discover opportunities to get connected with other women, developing friendships and community.

### **DISCIPLESHIP TEAM LEADER - Jane Engelhardt ([janeengelhardt@msn.com](mailto:janeengelhardt@msn.com))**

Provide opportunities to study God's Word and learn how to apply it to daily living.

For more information contact:  
Jaci Gordon

**Women's Ministry Coordinator**

515-222-1520, ext. 106

[jaci.gordon@hopewdm.org](mailto:jaci.gordon@hopewdm.org)