



Unwrap the Gift



*What we are is God's gift to us.
What we become is our gift to God.*

Eleanor Powell
www.quote garden.com

Unwrap this gift of resources from the THQ Women's Ministries Team

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Letter from Commissioner Helen Clifton



WPWM Message 2010

Dear Sisters in Christ,

'We have an altar' (Hebrews 13: 10)

Greetings in the precious Name of Jesus, as we enter another year. The Lord has been with us throughout the past year and He will not fail us now.

We offer a simple theme for your consideration this year. The teaching in Hebrews chapter thirteen reminds us of the importance of personal religion. 'We have an altar' challenges us to remember that in our hearts we each have a meeting place with the Lord Jesus Christ. It also reminds us of the family altar – the time and place for prayer within the home where children are taught about the love of God and His daily care for them. Even in our Salvation Army halls, the 'altar' is a place with free access at any time for the penitent soul to kneel and seek the Father's face.

Do we have such an altar? It is not an elaborate, decorated place, nor a special holy place to which only a few have access. It is an entirely spiritual and personal concept, arising out of our forgiven relationship with Jesus. Our altar is where we kneel our souls to Him. It can be at the mealtable, or by the bed or anywhere we choose. We are free to approach the Lord with our prayers anywhere, without any requirement but a contrite and loving heart.

Please take the time to teach this to your women and indeed to all you meet in this year.

If we use the altar in our hearts daily and hourly, we shall be transformed into His likeness and sanctified by His grace.

With warmest greetings for 2010.

In Christ,

Helen Clifton
Commissioner
World President of Women's Ministries

Letter from Commissioner Linda Bond

1 September 2009

Dear Friends:

It is with pleasure that I commend this Resource Manual to you. I realise you have your own creative ideas for Women's Ministries' programmes but I also know that you will find this material invaluable. And no wonder! It comes from a variety of women who know women, who know their subject and who know how to relate.

The subject for this Resource Manual is GIFTS and that in itself gives ample opportunity for creative juices to flow. But it is also a subject that sparks so many memories for all of us. We think immediately of the many gifts we received throughout the years and which ones were most significant.

As I have moved around as an officer, I occupied houses that were not my own and had furnishings that were not of my choosing. But what made the house my home were the ornaments and pictures that were mine. And almost all of those have come to me as gifts.

Gifts are given for the receiver but the truth is, those I received remind me of the giver. On occasion, I have just sat during my prayer time and looked at "my things" and prayed specifically for the person who gave me the gift. For me, they keep me connected.

There is a deeper truth in all of this. The Great Giver is God. We are on the receiving end, are we not, of immeasurable blessings? But what His gifts spark in us, is heartfelt praise and thanksgiving and a desire to give in return, not just to Him but to others.

I pray that as you will be enriched through the program ideas here but also as you use them, that you yourself will be a gift of God to the women you serve.

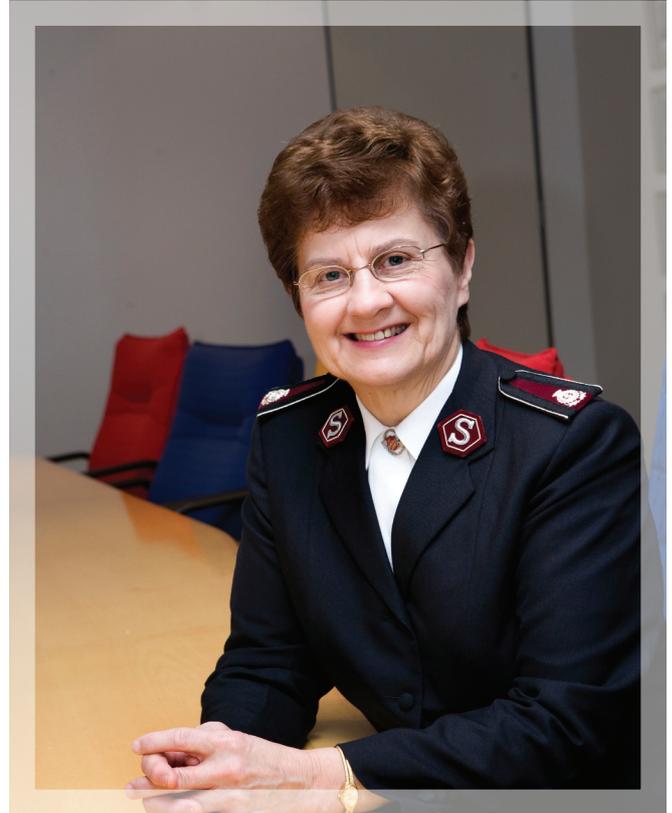
God bless you richly.

Yours sincerely,

Linda Bond

Commissioner

Territorial President of Women's Ministries



Women's Ministry Territorial Project 2010

Our sisters in
Malawi



Women's Literacy and Savings project provides an
Oppportunity to empower women and
Reducate poverty through
Training in literacy and business management skills, bringing
Hope and Health

Our goal - \$90,000



Mission Priorities



One Army, One Mission

We will do whatever it takes to see:

1. A territory marked by prayer and holiness
2. Our whole territory - in every place - involved in evangelism
3. Corps healthy and multiplying
4. Our people equipped and empowered to serve the world
5. The territory passionate about bringing children to Jesus
6. Youth trained and sent out to frontline mission
7. Significant increase of new soldiers and officers

And we will be a Salvation Army knowing who we are, showing who we are and being who we are.

The gift of friendship

Major Joanne Slater – THQ

Décor.

This could be done elegantly using soft colours and flowers.

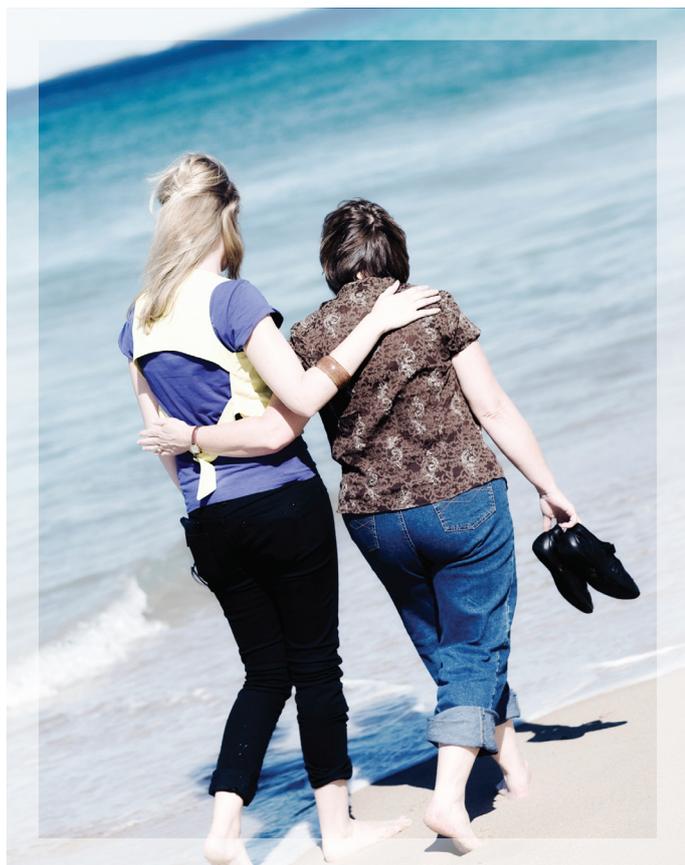
Morning tea could be made a little fancier, serving sandwich fingers, cookies, brownies, cool drinks, tea or coffee. Table would be set for this special occasion.

Preparation.

This meeting could be used as an outreach day – “Celebrating the Gift of Friendship.” This meeting could also be used for the first one at the beginning of the year to introduce the idea of a secret friend. Encourage the ladies to bring a friend to the meeting. This meeting could also be used to send invitations to those who have stopped attending, to encourage them to come and renew their friendship.

Also, encourage the ladies to bring a photo of their special friend, have a special area set up for them with some flowers.

With this in mind, have a special area set up with candles and use this area for those special friends who have passed away.



Participation.

This could be done at the beginning as part of the welcome.

Each one who has brought a friend along is to introduce them and then share an interesting fact about them.

For those who have responded to the invitation to come, or who used to attend, link them to someone, they may know. If not, prepare someone to look after them.

Suggested Songs.

- SASB 645 - What a friend we have in Jesus.
- SASB Chorus 163 - He's the same today as yesterday.
- SASB Chorus 146 - A never failing friend

Game 1. (See CD)

How well do you know your friends?

Game 2. (See CD)

Following up on your friends.

Devotions (See CD for full notes)

Secret Friend

Many groups will already know how this activity operates but it does take some encouragement from the leader for it to be successful.

See CD for template of name cards. Write the name of each lady on a card. Place in an envelope labelled “My Secret Friend” written on the envelope. One is then handed to each of the ladies before they leave. Throughout the year, participants keep in touch with their secret friend by sending notes and special gifts. They are encouraged also to pray for their friend. It is important to keep this anonymous until the end of the year when the women finally reveal their identities to their secret friend.

Wonderful friendships are developed!

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- See CD for Selected Prayers – Friends
- See CD for ideas on holding a Frangipani Friendship Morning Tea
- See CD for quotes on friendship (handout)
- See CD Bags, Boxes and Bows for Craft idea.

The gift of knowledge (education)

Captain Donna Evans – Booth College

Décor.

Piles of books e.g. dictionary, thesaurus, atlas, other reference books... some open. Globe. Display pictures of graduates... Personal pictures or use samples on CD. Mortarboard. (If you can't obtain a real one, make one from black cardboard)

Background

Knowledge unwrapped through education...

Education encompasses teaching and learning specific skills, and also something less tangible but more profound: the imparting of knowledge, good judgement and wisdom.

Education plays a very decisive role in the development of any country or culture. If all the members of any society have done the basic education then they can contribute towards developing a crime free and progressive society. Education brings about economic growth and prosperity in any society.

(quotations.about.com/cs/inspirationquotes/a/knowledge1.htm)

When you think about it, after unconditional love and attention, there may be nothing more powerful a parent can give a child than education. Education brings with it adult mentors who care about kids, knowledge about health, the world, character-building experiences, a responsibility to participate in government, and a sense of unity with the world. Truly exceptional education impacts the whole person, body, mind and soul, instils in a child a love of learning that will guide an entire life, and inspires creativity as well as passion!

Education cannot be taken away – it becomes a part of the person learning something and transforms that person as it happens, bringing self-confidence, curiosity, joy, creativity, and yes, responsibility.

Nancy L. Brown, PhD Adolescent Health (www.healthline.com/blogs/teen_health/2008/08/importance-of-education.html)

Our founders, William & Catherine Booth were convinced of the merits of education.

Education is one of the four objectives on which the Home League is based. 'To increase skills and develop powers of thought and to promote a happy wholesome life.'

Bring & Share

A childhood memory from school/School photo/School uniform/Best Teacher

Education Quotes (See CD for handout)

Stories (See CD for 2 options)

Read the Bible

Proverbs 2:1-11 (NLT)

Romans 12:1, 2 (NLT)

Share a Devotional Thought

Bring a favourite song that tells of something that you 'know' about God or about your Christian walk. (e.g. from SASB - Song 144, Chorus of Song 257, verse 3 of Song 360 & from the Chorus Section of SASB – 155, 167, 142, 163, 133)

Give your testimony – what does this knowledge mean to you? How has this 'knowledge' helped you, brought you joy, kept you safe?

Sing

Choose from the list above and/or the following:

The Potter's Hand (I know for sure all my days are held in Your Hand!)

All I once held dear (Knowing You Jesus)

Teach me how to love Thee (Chorus 105 SASB)

Benediction

Use 2 Peter 3:18 as the Benediction

"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen." (NIV)

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- Invite a Christian school teacher to share her testimony
- Invite a uni student from the corps to share her testimony
- Invite a speaker who has served as a teacher in a developing country
- Include a segment from the quiz show "Ridgey Didge" (See CD)

The gift of service

Major Christine Longbottom – DHQ Sydney East & Illawarra Division

Service

To learn the joy of giving and doing for others.

Song

HLSB 79 Tune 189	O Jesus I have promised Aurelia
HLSB 76 Tune 25	O happy day O happy day
HLSB 22 (chorus)	Let the beauty of Jesus

Bible Reading

Luke 10:25-28

Participation

Display a lovely unwrapped gift box (open). The gift tag should read "The Gift of Service".

Each lady is given a piece of paper with the title *A Gift of Service that you have done or would like to do for someone!* (See CD for template) Ladies write their response and place it in the box. Through the meeting you could choose several ladies to discuss their service!

Quiz

How many words can you make from "The Gift of Service".

Introduction

We all can think of some way that we can serve others. We so often give of our time, our talents, our money in The Gift of Service.

There is an old saying **SERVICE WITH A SMILE**. I cannot imagine that we could ever give something to help someone without a smile or at least a pleasing look upon our face.

I know if someone was to help me and they had a cross look upon their face I would feel very despondent about their gift. A smile is such a simple thing.

I'm sure that when we look at a baby we cannot help but smile. If we had a cranky look on our face the baby would cry and that's just how we would feel if somebody gave us a gift without a smile!

Devotion

 (See CD for full notes)

Other resources/ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- See CD Selected Prayers – Consecration and Dedication
- See CD – Seeds of Kindness (UK resource)



The gift of encouragement

Marie Walker – Gladstone Corps

Inspiration from “Silver Boxes”, by Florence Littauer – Word Publishing

Introduction

If the leader is familiar with “Silver Boxes” she can explain the box idea at this stage. If not, I recommend the ladies read this beautiful little book.

Devotions

Use Ephesians 4:29 – “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers”.

An old favourite song, “Home on the Range” reads ‘where seldom is heard a DISCOURAGIN’ word’. Today’s text speaks of ENCOURAGING words.

Chorus

No. 7 HLSB Come beautiful Christ. (Chorus 61/SASB) uses this lovely tune – encourage the ladies to sing it:

Leader to prepare single “Encouragement” verses (as one would find in a Promise Box). Distribute one per person, to read aloud, then kept.

Doubling up is OK.

Suggested verses (See CD)

Exercise No. 1

Silver Boxes

Prior to the meeting ask the ladies to bring along some small boxes – matchbox size is great, also toothpaste box, small chocolate boxes, etc.

H.L. to provide roll of Alfoil or Florist silver wrapping, boxes (just in case), scissors, sticky tape, gift tape (for the bows), small pieces of white cardboard (for the word of encouragement), staplers, biros and paper punch.

Activity

Invite the ladies to wrap a box, attach a bow and a card, then write a word of ENCOURAGEMENT for someone known to them, whether present at the HL meeting or elsewhere. This could be a text or a simple “I am praying for you”, “I love you”, “I care”, etc. Then present the GIFT OF ENCOURAGEMENT.

The idea of the box is that it be placed in a prominent place at home – bedroom table, desk, dressing table – where it can be a daily reminder that someone cares.

Exercise No. 2

Competition (if time permits). Ask ladies to try wrapping a box using only one hand. Time each competitor!

Vocal Solo

 If I can help somebody

Song SASB 662/86 Help us to help each other, Lord

Chorus: SASB 84 Make me a blessing

Exercise No. 3

Encouragement

Ladies to pair off and identify each others current need (be sensitive – not everyone feels comfortable sharing). Offer a listening ear, a word of encouragement, a prayer, perhaps hold a hand. Follow up with a phone call/card/visit.

HANDLE WITH CARE AND PRAYER

Poem

Silver Boxes – Laminate bookmarks and distribute to each woman. (See CD)

Closing chorus

No. 79 (Chorus SASB)

“Lord, lay some soul upon my heart, and love
that soul through me;

And may I humbly do my part to win
that soul through Thee”.

WE ALL NEED WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for some additional devotional readings
- See CD for an optional role play to include in your meeting
- See CD for powerpoint “The allegory of the frog” (prepared by Colonel Jan Condon)
- Use readings from “Hugs to Encourage and Inspire” by John Smith

The gift of worship

Margaret Bull – Tamworth



Preparation (See CD)

(Slide 1) Our God has given his people a gift package containing so many things to encourage us to respond, such as:

The earth to enjoy
The confirmation of his glory and splendour
The gift of joyful songs

His people in turn also respond with a gift package. What will it contain?

God wants to give everyone on earth the gift of worship in a number of different ways.

(Slide 2) He has given us the earth to enjoy. He is worthy of worship, for we enjoy this earth. Psalm 24: The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it.

(Slide 3) He has given us Himself and shown through His word the splendour of His holiness. He is worthy of worship, for we have seen God and His holiness through His word.

1 Chronicles 16: 29 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due to his name. Bring an offering and come before him; worship the Lord in the splendour of his holiness.

(Slide 4) He has given us joy and joyful music. He is worthy of worship. Music can reach the hardest heart.

Psalm 100:1-2 Shout for joy to the Lord all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

Look at the empty box – an empty box that God wants to fill with all we need to give back to him as a gift of worship. He makes himself plain. Can we accept and open the gift He is offering? (refer to the labelled box "Please open carefully"). Ensure each item is gently and carefully removed from the box, each individual label is read out and displayed.

(Editors notes: these items represent gifts God has given to us in order that we can offer him the gift of worship)

(Slide 5) We should be mindful that we who live on God's earth can easily 'open the box' and destroy the beautiful contents that God has given us.

(Slides 6-14) Song 25 (SASB) "All things bright and beautiful"



Prayer time

A suggestion is that after praying for those of your group with particular needs, pray for courage so that even the most timid members of any group can be willing to 'open the box' and use the gift.

(Slide 15-16) Poem – written by M. Bull (See CD)

(Slides 17-19) – Song 579 (SASB) He giveth more grace

We can also prepare a 'return' gift to God. This is the time to be really creative. Now we are giving God our Gift of Worship which can be packaged in diverse ways. Emphasise the paucity of our gift compared to that which God gives to us. Have ready the gold cloth, so that the return gifts can be formed into a display.

Song

"Come, now is the time to worship"
iWorship DVD volume ©

During this song women can come forward and present visual gifts of worship. Some suggestions could include:

1. Written words of worship on small slips of paper which are to be tucked into the blooms of the bouquet of flowers... this represents giving to God the treasures from the resources of this earth given to us.
2. Cards with these words. "We bring our gift of praise and worship to God for His glory and splendour which shine down on us as part of His gift. How radiant and beautiful!
3. The box shaped like a heart which can hold our most treasured possessions as a love offering to God. Cut-out hearts can be distributed to those present so that they can write on the reverse side their own words of love in worship to God.

(Editors notes- leaders may also think of some other options to use during this segment)

(Slide 20) Poem - use Song 183 (SASB) "O Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness"

Finally, as we raise our joyful songs to God in worship, messages to God about all the things and people dear to us could be put into balloons (use balloon pump). The balloons could then be tied around the display, taken home, or let go into the wind.

Bible reading

Psalm 96

Final Song

Come now is the time for worship

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- See CD for selected prayers – Adoration and Thanksgiving
- See CD for Poem – Exuberant Praise Psalm 148
- See CD for I Give to Thee – (UK Resource)



The gift of sacrifice - self denial

Major Julie Campbell – Parramatta

Décor

Suggestion 1—in keeping with Self Denial- have no décor e.g. no tablecloths

Suggestion 2—use the promotional material for this year's Self Denial Appeal e.g. posters, flag, souvenirs.

Morning Tea

Serve rice or tea & coffee without food

Invite a speaker who has served overseas to share their experience of The Gift of Sacrifice both personally and in their ministry and service.

Suggested Songs

Altar Service Song – tune 185 Peace – (See CD for powerpoint)

The Source 515 - This is my desire
118 - Give thanks with a grateful heart
HLSB 117 - This is my Father's world
85 - Out in the highways

Show DVD week 1 of the media presentation for this year's Self Denial Appeal.

Prayer time

Use prayer request cards -have the name of the country, people and projects featured in the Self Denial presentation printed on small cards and ask the ladies to pray for the request.

Show DVD week 2

History: Self-Denial refers to the internal effort to raise funds for The Salvation Army's worldwide operations. The Salvation Army has held an annual Self-Denial Week ever since 1886, when Major John Carleton announced that he had no ready cash to give to the cause, but instead planned to go without his daily pudding for a year in order to save and donate 50 shillings.

General William Booth was so impressed with the concept that he encouraged all Salvationists to go without something to assist the ongoing work and mission. The first self-denial week raised around 4,000 pounds; it now generates millions each year for the Army's work. The money is given sacrificially by officers, soldiers, adherents and those who attend The Salvation Army throughout the world. Many give One Week's Salary.

The following appeal appeared in the 4th September, 1886 issue of 'The War Cry':

(See CD for full text)

Share

Ask the ladies to share their experiences of Self Denial or of 'going without' to help someone else.

Quiz (See CD) This quiz is about the different ways of giving and accepting gifts in different cultures.

Show DVD week 3

Thought (See CD for full notes)

Bible Reading

Matthew 25:31-40

Encourage the ladies to 'give up' something for the Self Denial Appeal and provide a small box or bag for the ladies to place coins in for the Appeal.

Show DVD week 4

Share the poem 'Love Giving' (See CD)

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings

The gift of time

Major Christine Ivers – Brisbane City Temple

Scripture

Ecclesiastes 3: - 1-8

Décor

Various watches, time pieces, clocks, sundial. Ask ladies to bring in a clock or watch from home to share the story associated with it. Tic Toc biscuits for morning tea.

Possible Songs

- Shout to the Lord
- Still – Reuben Morgan
- What the Lord has done for me
- Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord
- There's never been a day like this day (Fijian song)

Arnold Bennett said this about time:

"You wake up in the morning and lo – your purse is magically filled with twenty-four hours of the unmanufactured tissue of the universe of your life. It is yours. It is the most precious of your possessions. No one can take it from you. It is unstealable. And no one receives either more or less than you receive."

<http://www.wow4u.com/time/index.html>

Once upon a time... These four words preface most fairytales we have read since we were born. Time seems so long ago. Yet time doesn't ever stand still. Yes, there is yesterday but there is also today and tomorrow. The common cry seems to be: "I wish there were more hours in a day". We never seem to have enough hours to do the things we need to... or want to do.

Various civilizations throughout the years wanted to organize their lives so they devised ways to measure time. Seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months and years, gradually came into being.

The Babylonians were the first to divide the path of the sun into the 12 equal parts that we now call hours. They were also the ones who divided the circle into 360 parts called degrees, which were later divided into 60 minutes.

Primitive sundials were used to track the movement of the sun well into the Middle Ages, when mechanical clocks came along. As more sophisticated ways of measuring time developed, minutes were divided into seconds and seconds into tenths and hundredths and thousandths.

What is the value of a hundredth of a second? Ask almost any Olympic athlete.

Puzzle – (See CD for Word Search)

THE GIFT OF TIME (See CD handout to share)

Sharing

Ladies to share stories of watches and clocks they have brought.

Devotional Talk (See CD for full notes)

Song

Still (words and Music Reuben Morgan)

Hand out: (See CD)

"The Gift of Time" bookmark

"Gift coupon"

A thought: The flow of sand in an hourglass can be used to keep track of elapsed time. It also concretely represents the present as being between the past and the future.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time>

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- See CD for ASAP (handout)



The gift of sacrifice - Easter

Major Ruth Dollin – Foster House



Preparation

Two or three weeks before Easter suggest to ladies that they think of something that they could sacrifice. Eg. food, time (spend in prayer) etc.

Google: The Period of Lent on internet for information.

Refreshments: Hot Cross Buns

Décor

Set up around the room small tables with different reminders of Easter. Ladies can have an opportunity to reflect on the significance of the season.

For Example

- Red table cloth on each table.
- Pictures of different aspects of Easter (as listed below)
- Words on card (as listed below)
- Props (as listed below)
- Candle (Lit)

Picture	Prop	Words on Card
Palm Sunday	palm branch	HOSANNA
Jesus before Pilate		CONDEMNED
Jesus praying in the garden	praying hands	SURRENDER
Judas betrays Jesus	silver coins	BETRAYED
The Crucifixion	wooden cross, crown of thorns, 3 nails	SACRIFICE
The empty tomb	white cloth	HE IS RISEN

Note: Next to The Crucifixion set up a table with basket pens/paper –

Opportunity is given for ladies to write on paper something to lay at the foot of the cross and leave there.

Play Easter meditation music quietly in the background and allow time for ladies to spend time at each table and reflect on each aspect of the Easter period.

Songs

HLSB 36: I come to the garden alone
SASB 136: When I survey the wondrous cross
From Heaven You came – The Servant King (Graham Kendrick)

Sharing

What aspect of Easter holds the most significance for the ladies.

Message

“Sacrifice” – Oxford Dictionary: Giving up of a valued thing for the sake of another, that is more worthy or more important.

Christ’s offering of himself in the crucifixion.

Easter is a significant time of year for the Christian.

There are many aspects to consider – none more important than the other.

The example of Christ’s sacrifice and his obedience to the will of the Father, gives us an opportunity to reflect not only on His sacrifice but gives us an opportunity to once again examine our personal response and look for opportunities to honour Christ and his gift to us.

Scriptures

Mark 8:31. AMP

Jesus told his disciples that it was necessary for Him to suffer many things.

What an example of obedience and courage. The fact that he was aware and still continued the journey to the cross says much to us about his absolute confidence in God’s plan and purpose.

Luke 22: 39-42 AMP

Jesus struggled with the reality of going to the cross. This says much about his humanity and that he knows about our struggles.

Matt 27: 31-54 AMP.

When they had finished making sport of him they stripped him of his robe and led him to be crucified.

We will never comprehend how Jesus must have felt to be treated so cruelly and yet we today are still able to experience the gift of salvation and assurance of a relationship with Him. What a gift!

Illustration

The story is told of a man who worked on a drawbridge. The bridge would be drawn so that the ships could pass underneath; the bridge would be put back in place so that

the trains could safely pass across the river. One day just before a train was scheduled to arrive, the worker noticed that his son was playing around the huge gears and that his clothing had actually become caught in the gears. The man quickly had to make a choice: He could save his son which would mean that scores of people would plunge to their death as the train fell into the river below.

His other option would be to save the train which would mean that his son would be mauled and crushed and killed in the huge gears. Out of love for the people on the train the man decided to sacrifice his son whom he greatly loved. This story is just a human illustration, but perhaps in a small way it helps us to appreciate what God did for us in “not sparing His Son” Romans 8:32.

This story is portrayed in a short video clip on You Tube. “Most (Czech for the Bridge)” A man sacrifices his son. www.youtube.com/watch?v=FpWZPRiknA

Conclude by giving ladies a further opportunity to reflect around the different memories of Easter set up around the room.

Play the recorded song “Above all” by Michael Smith.

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- See CD for Selected Prayers—Good Friday



The gift of sacrifice - ANZAC day

Captain Dianne Lawson – RSDS



Photo: Shairon Paterson

Décor

Anything with a military feel that you can find, borrow etc. You may have ex-servicemen/women in your community that still have memorabilia from their time of service. Various types of service dress/ hats etc make a good display.

If there is an Army Reserve Depot in your town, they may have some Auscam houchies or cam net that you could borrow for the day.

An Australian flag, photo of the Queen if available.

Personally I like to set up a Salvo's Hop In Hut, either using a tent, or making an area into a designated Drop In place. Have writing materials (e.g. pens, writing paper, envelopes, stamps and maybe even an old mail box). On another table have board games, packs of playing cards etc. A set of Quoits or an old Hooky Board or Dart Board are also helpful. Old Urns and coffee metal coffee mugs can give some authenticity.

Special Guests

If you are in or around Sydney, Brisbane, Canberra, Singleton, or Townsville you may be able to request a representative from RSDS to be your guest. They are usually pretty busy around Anzac Day, so get your request in early. Serving Sallymen may even be able to bring their mobile Hop In with them. Also there are a number of other officers or retired officers around the country who have served in RSDS, they may be happy to assist as well.

Songs

I tend to use songs from WWII era and print up a Hop In Sing-a-long Song sheet. These could include:

- It's a long way to Tipperary
- Kiss me goodnight Sergeant Major
- Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag and smile
- Daisy, Daisy

Other songs could include: Abide with Me, The National Anthem, God Save the Queen etc. My Lord, what love is this, Only Nineteen (Redgum), Waltzing Matilda.

Traditions and Symbols

The Ode

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old,
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning
We will remember them.

Response: We will remember them

The Last Post

The Last Post historically has been used to signify the end of the day. It is played during commemorative ceremonies to serve as a tribute to the dead.

Minutes Silence

One (or two) minutes silence is held to reflect on the significance of the day and as a sign of respect.

Reveille and Rouse

In major ceremonies, the Last Post is normally followed by Rouse except at Dawn Service when Reveille is played. Historically, Reveille woke the soldier at dawn.

An extremely helpful website is: www.anzacday.org.au

Under Education tab on this website is the title "Soldiers of the Cross". This gives a summary of the life of Salvation Army Chaplain William Mackenzie (Fighting Mac) and his service to the soldiers on the front line in WWI including Gallipoli.

"Not Only a Hero" under the education tab gives the story of Simpson and his donkey.

Also under the Education tab, there is a Quiz and some other helpful information.

Under the tab "Anzac Day Services" there is another tab for Poetry and it lists about 10 different poems you could use.

Talk

Where possible invite two or three people to speak on their personal sacrifices during times of war or service for their country. These could include a service person, a spouse, and maybe a child. (Give them a time limit e.g. 3 - 5 minutes each)

Wrap up with comments based on the Scripture from John 15:9ff "... Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends".

Or

Talk 2 (See CD)

This talk includes some history about Anzac Day. It also talks about today's soldiers and the sacrifices they and their families make. It comes from the personal perspective from Dianne in her ministry in the RSDS

Or

Talk 3 (See CD)

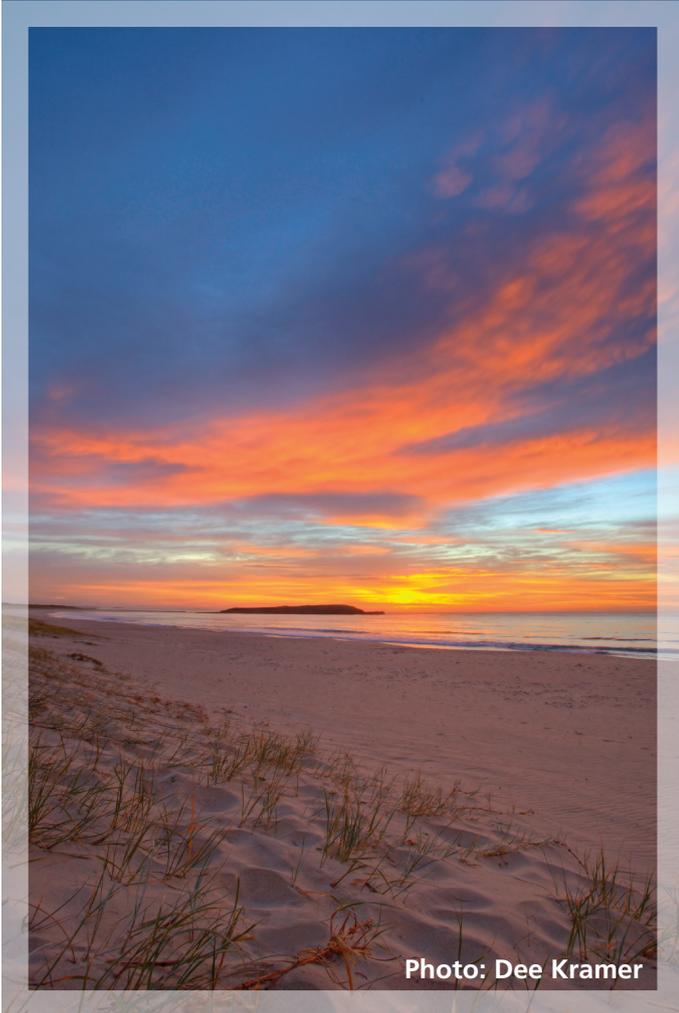
This informative talk will give the listeners an idea of the ministry of the RSDS.

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for some additional devotional readings
- See CD for photographs to use in a powerpoint presentation (Courtesy of Captain Dianne Lawson)
- Play the DVD "Still Standing – Stan's Story" Produced by Luke Nowell. 30 minute documentary about a Salvationist captured as a POW with a powerful testimony of forgiveness. Stan Carlyon was a faithful soldier at the Earlwood Corps and was called home to be with his Lord on August 26th 2009. For more information see this website <http://www.salvosuppliersyd.com/scripts/prodView.asp?idproduct=602>
- See CD for Reading – Take My Son
- See CD for additional Anzac articles from Pipeline "Celebrating Anzac Day"

The gift of a brand new day

Major Rowena Smith – THQ



Décor Suggestions

Display pictures of sunrises – both rural and coastal.

Display sayings/scripture verses on A4 laminated sheets, either on walls of the room or on display stands on the main table. (See CD)

Main table could be set up as a breakfast table scene. Include teapot, cups, jug, bowls, plates, toaster with popped toast, boiled eggs in egg cups, morning paper. (ALDI sell a breakfast cereal called “Sunrise” which could be part of this display)

Play a recording of bird noises as women are arriving. (There are a variety of CD’s available inspired by nature.... try your local library)

Program ideas

Pick and choose from the following suggestions

1. Songs. Select from the following
 - HLSB 25/SASB 33 Great is thy faithfulness
 - HLSB 69/SASB 35 Morning has broken
 - HLSB 108 Let the sunshine in your heart shine out
 - HLSB 117/SASB 42 This is my Father’s world
 - HLSB 127/SASB 187 When morning gilds the skies
 - This is the day
 - 505 The Source1 The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases
2. Participation. Ask group if they know how to say “Good Morning” in a different language. (See CD for slides to include in a powerpoint presentation)

- Conclude with the Irish greeting which means "God to you in the morning". This is a nice thought... to greet someone with the desire that God be in their morning. Another familiar Irish greeting is "Top of the morning".
3. A "Good Morning" Psalm – Psalm 108:1-5 or Psalm 113
 4. Prayer – Refer to the CD Selected Prayers – "In the Morning" (several options)
 5. DVD. Play the first scene from the movie "Hairspray". (Set in the 60's) In this scene the main character Tracy wakes up and sings "Good Morning Baltimore". Tracy wakes with such a positive attitude. Emphasise the line "Every day is an open door" and that Tracy desires to embrace the new day and whatever it holds. This segment is just a bit of fun... I suggest you view the scene beforehand to determine if it is right for your group. Use a DVD or log on to YouTube and use a wireless broadband modem to play the scene live through a laptop.
 6. Competition – "How do you start your day?" See CD for handout. Distribute crossword activity.
 7. Discussion – following the competition ask "I wonder if any of these things are part of your morning routine... seek responses from the group about how they start their day. Display of up to 5 different devotional books suitable for daily readings. Show ladies what is available. This segment could come immediately after the previous discussion to encourage women to include a devotional time as part of their daily routine.
 8. Prayer Activity. See CD for 3 suggestions
 9. Poems. See CD for 5 suggestions
 10. Humour
Play 2 short video clips "Going home on Friday" (featuring a penguin bouncing around on the ice). Followed by "Going to work on Monday" (featuring a polar bear pushing its face along the ice and eventually collapsing). Make the comparison to how people wake up to the start of a new day – energetically or with no enthusiasm at all. Contact Rowena Smith to email these clips to you or log on to You Tube and use a wireless broadband modem to play them live at your meeting. Make sure to have a practice run first. You will need speakers if playing the clips from your laptop.
 11. Quotes about "Mornings"
These quotes might trigger some discussion or comments. See CD for powerpoint slides or handout.
 12. Audio visual – "Sunrises"
See CD - powerpoint presentation
Equipment needed: CD player, CD recording of the well known classical piece "Morning" from Peer Gynt Suite No 1 by Edvig Grieg. (Might be available at your local library) Alternatively, use a recording of John Denver's song "Sunshine on my Shoulders".

This 3 minute audiovisual features images of sunrises fading in and out with scripture and other quotes. It is fully automatic. Click mouse to start and the presentation continues to the end without need for manual control. Start music at the first slide and fade music out on last slide. Suggest you practice a couple of times beforehand.
 13. Devotional Message – choose from options on CD

The gift of wisdom

Captain Wendy Watts – Booth College

Preparation

Pass the Parcel

Music

Prizes- diabetic lollies

See CD for copy of the serenity prayer for each person

Prior to meeting ask ladies to recall words of wisdom spoken to them by their mums or grandmothers.

Décor

A variety of wrapped gifts (e.g. gift boxes, gift bags, wrapped gifts) with the letters of the word "Wisdom" on each gift. Therefore you would need 6 gifts.

Title on powerpoint. (See CD) You might like to add more slides to include the songs and also the scripture verses used later in the message.

Welcome & Intro to theme

Ask the ladies for their ideas and definitions of wisdom

SASB 25 All things bright & beautiful (NB chorus)

TUNE 604 All things bright & beautiful

Prayer— join together in reading - A thanksgiving to God (Read p 107 of HLSB See CD)

NB For Education – Teach us to order our days rightly that we may enter the gate of WISDOM

Game

"Pass the Parcel"

God offers spiritual wisdom to all who ask for it. But it is a gift, and like all gifts it needs to be unwrapped. We are going to unwrap the idea of wisdom, in the game pass the parcel.

Preparation

Start by wrapping the prize. Instead of using newspaper, why not use old or cheap wrapping. As each layer of paper is added, attach a small prize (optional) and an instruction for each participant to complete. If your group is 10 or more you might like to consider having two parcels going at the same time in different directions of course. This adds fun and provides for maximum participation. In keeping with the theme of the meeting, I have included some suggestions on the CD.

At the end of the game you might like to conclude with the following comment.

WISDOM – This is the quality of mind that enables a person to live well and to counsel for successful living, particularly with the counsel of God. There is a natural wisdom that makes men cunning and others powerful, that doesn't quite cut it with God.

(1 Cor. 1:19-21, James 3:15).

But God offers spiritual wisdom to all who ask for it (James 1:15). His gift is available to all who would teach, counsel, preach, or lead in any work of God. Some Christians, however, receive the gift of spiritual wisdom in extraordinary measure.

SASB 577 God of grace and God of glory (NB verse 1)

TUNE 423 Regent Square

Humour

The Three Wise women

You do know what would have happened if it had been three wise WOMEN instead of men, don't you?

They would have asked for directions,
arrived on time,

helped deliver the baby,

cleaned the stable,

made a casserole,

and brought disposable nappies!

Foolish Criminals

(See handout on CD for copies of these humorous stories for ladies to take home to share with family and friends)

More Humour

You Tube A Mothers Rendition to William Tell Overture – Lyrics are included:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_T5brqV6Y1M

Message

See CD for full notes

(Handout copies of Serenity Prayer)

SASB 773 When you feel weakest (NB verse 3)

TUNE 621 Blessed assurance

Conclude by reading together the Serenity Prayer

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings

The gift of forgiveness

Captain Fran Everitt – Tuggeranong

This reflection was prepared by Captain Fran Everitt for a Good Friday service. It could be adapted into a reflection for use in a women's meeting e.g. Home League, Mid Week Worship Meeting.

Worship

Format of the service

The service is scripted for 2 readers, these being the leader and a second reader. It involves commentary on various aspects of the painting called Forgiven by Thomas Blackshear 2nd. (See CD for script - print 2 copies)

These aspects include Darkness, Guilt, Repentance, Strength, Justification, Growth. The service includes several songs as suggested and prayers read in unison by the group.

Small pass-it-on style cards are distributed featuring the painting by Blackshear. (available from Koorong).

Décor suggestions:

Ideally it requires a copy of the painting "Forgiven" by the artist Thomas Blackshear 2nd for the women to view as the service proceeds. Pass-it-on cards might be the best option. Another good resource would be the book about the painting entitled Forgiven: The Painting by Thomas Blackshear 2nd by Roy Lessin.

Large wooden cross, red cloth, a mallet, large nails, Easter lilies. A darkened room would help create the right atmosphere. A spotlight is suggested at one point to focus on the cross.

Candles placed around the room, though not lit until the final song.

Other Resources

A powerpoint presentation has been included on the CD. Note that copyright permission has been received to include quotes and prayers from the book. Images from the book have not been used due to copyright restrictions. (Hence the suggestion that each person is given a pass-it-on card of the painting so that they can focus on it during the service)

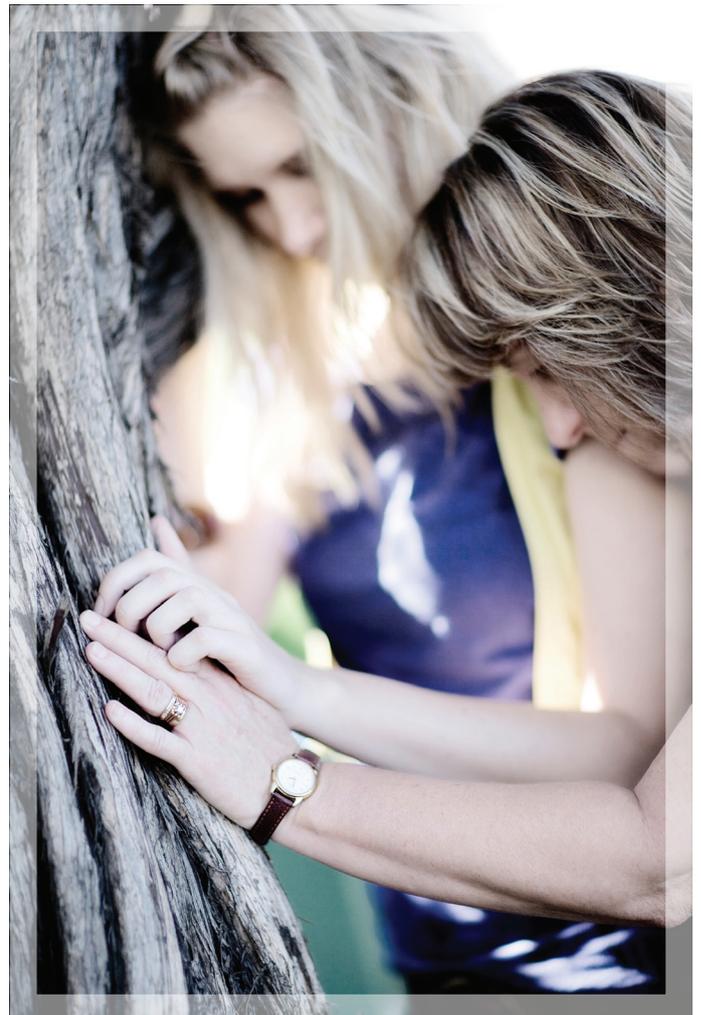
Suggested Songs include

How deep the Father's love
The wonderful cross
Lord have mercy
The Light has come – words by Chick Yuill from Hallelujah Choruses 10
At the foot of the cross (Don Moen CD)

A video entitled "Forgiven" is also included in the service. It can be bought using this link <http://interviewwithgod.com/forgiven/>

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings



The gift most wonderful – Jesus' birth

Major Joanne Slater – THQ

Décor

A manger scene centred on a table with the manger and Baby Jesus being the centre point. Also in the background to the sides, arrange a couple of gift boxes stacked on each other with nice ribbon bows.

Participation

In preparation for the day, ask the ladies to bring along a gift that they had been given which they thought was wonderful (Have an area prepared to the side so that these gifts could be displayed).

Suggested Songs

SASB. 78 Christians awake.

SASB. 82 Hark! The herald angels sing.

SASB. 85 O come all ye faithful.

Introduction Story.

Finding The Perfect Gift. (See CD)

From The Handel's Messiah Family Advent Reader.

(To be read just before devotions.)

Thoughts on Gift Buying

List the things you do when you are preparing to purchase a gift. (Spend a short time discussing "What are the things we consider when we are purchasing a gift for someone?")

Devotions

As we have discussed there are many thoughts that go into the preparation of purchasing a gift. Does this make us wonder what God was thinking about when He was preparing for us "The Gift Most Wonderful" – Jesus' Birth?



The Gift He prepared for us was a gift that only He Himself could give. Knowing what was ahead for this precious gift, God still prepared this gift exactly to meet the needs of all who He created – in the past, in the present and in the future.

God gave us the Gift Most Wonderful.

There is a Celtic proverb which describes our Saviour as a "Wonder of Wonders and every wonder is true". God has done many wonderful things for us in and through Jesus Christ. We need to have our eyes opened in order to recognise all that God has done and proposes to do for us through our Wonderful Saviour.

He is wonderful in His grace as well as in His greatness. He came on a mission of grace to meet the deepest needs in the hearts and lives of men and women. With great grace He continues to work wonders in the lives of those who trust Him.

He is wonderful in His mercy as well as His majesty. He who is sinless came in order to bring mercy and forgiveness into the hearts and lives of men and women who were alienated from God. With great majesty He marched towards the cross and the tomb, and with divine power He conquered death and the grave in order to be our Saviour.

He is wonderful in His patience as well as in His power. With infinite patience He works in the hearts and lives of those who trust Him to produce miracles of grace. The creative, redeeming power of God was upon Him and continues to flow from Him into the hearts of those who respond to His love. A poet came face to face with His wonderful Christ and responded in the following way.

"I stand amazed in the presence
Of Jesus the Nazarene
And wonder how He could love me,
A sinner condemned, unclean.
How marvellous, how wonderful
And my song shall ever be:
How marvellous, how wonderful
Is my Saviour's love for me!"

Charles H. Gabriel
Song 179 SASB

Jesus is the Gift most Wonderful, as He is wonderful in His person, in His purpose, in His presence, and in His power – He is an eternal gift.

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- See CD for Poem – Christmas by Bruce D. Prewer

The gift of God's precious word

Captain Emma Moore – Yeppoon Mission

Room Setting and Display

It would be ideal if the room was made to feel home-like. A table could be set at the front of the room with Bibles of all different shapes and sizes displayed. A variety of Scripture verses in frames may be placed around the room too.

Song Suggestion

Wonderful words of Life	HLSB 94
Break thou the bread of Life	HLSB 7
I am so glad	HLSB 33
The Word is the way	HLSB 107
Standing on the promises	HLSB 95

Sharing

Invite people to share their favourite Bible verses or characters and why they have become a favourite. (You may want to give your people a week to prepare for this time of sharing.)

Poem

"As I sit and wait" by Major Keith Hampton
See CD for bookmarks

A Bible Quiz (See CD)

Other ideas: You may like to have some people share the different ways people study Scripture. Some suggestions include: Read through the Bible in one year (with a reading plan and guide), Read the Bible chronologically, and/or reading with the accompaniment of devotional material or a journal.

Devotions

You may like to try something different today and walk your people through the SOAP method together. S.O.A.P stands for Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer. Each person will need their own bible, pen and paper.

Follow these simple steps:-

Find a Bible passage that will be appropriate for your group for this day. For the first time, start with something easy- a passage from the Gospels, 1 Corinthians 13 or a Psalm. Before you invite your people to read the passage, take a moment to pray. Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you something new today.

Invite your people to quietly read the passage. As they read, they may want to jot down some thoughts or ideas that come to mind.

When the passage has been read through, invite your people to follow the SOAP method.

Scripture

Record the Scripture

Observation

Record an observation (What is happening in the passage).

Encourage your people to look for a verse, a thought or a word that is particularly encouraging... something that stands out for them. Invite your people to re-read that word, verse or phrase.

Application

When a verse or word has been identified, invite your people to think about this question, "How can my life be different because of what I have read today?" Invite them to right down some ideas.

Prayer

After writing down some ideas, invite your people to pray. At this time, they may like to write their prayer. Their prayer may be a question about what they have read, thanksgiving for the new insight or it may be a good time for confession and repentance.

Conclude this time with sharing or prayer together.

This method is a great way to get people reading the Bible for themselves. If you have people who are not yet following Jesus- this is still a great way for them to get to know him.

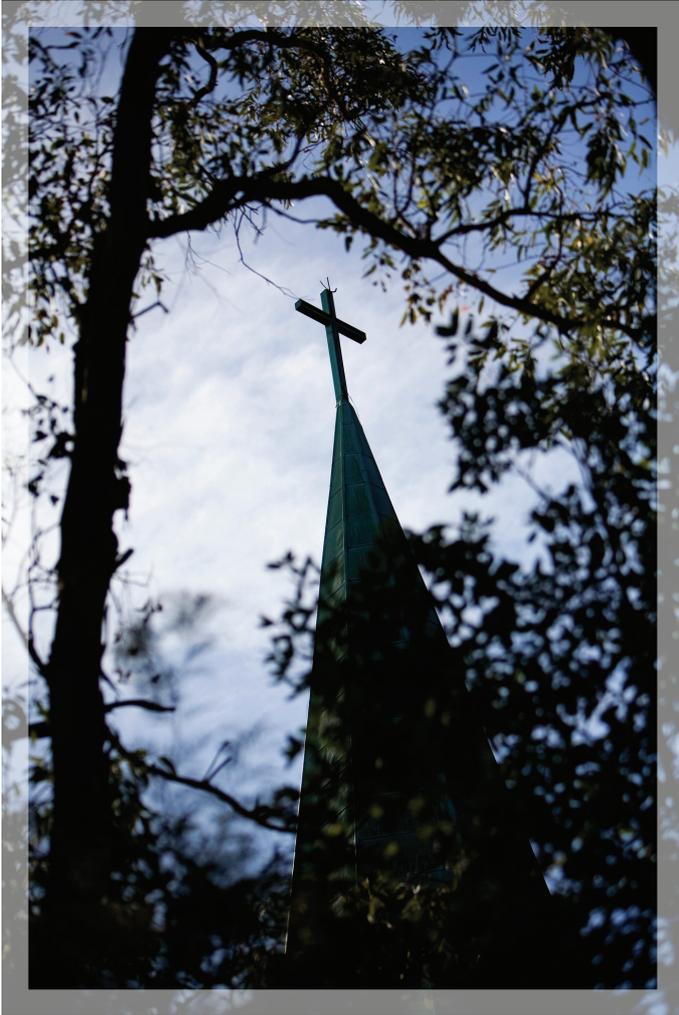
NB: If there are people in your group who have bad eyesight or who struggle to read- it would be a good idea to bring along some Good News Translations or Children's Bible's to be used for this devotional time.

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- Invite a speaker from The Bible Society/Gideons/Wycliffe Bible Translators
- Invite a speaker involved in distributing God's Word to lands where the Bible is not readily available.

The gift of hope

Glenys M. Goff – Belconnen Corps



This outline could be adapted and used around the time of the Women's Ministries Territorial Mission Project as it relates to giving hope not only to ourselves but to others.

Aim

To encourage ladies to consider that as we have received the Gift of Hope from Christ we can pass on this gift in practical and encouraging ways to others.

Décor

Using positive colours, decorate the table using tablecloth overlaid with a couple of sheets of pretty wrapping paper in a cross over fashion. Place some fresh flowers on the table. Light a large white 'church' candle and have smaller tea light candles scattered on the table amongst some rose petals. Lay ribbons on the table from the tea candles reaching up to the larger candle (Our Hope comes from God). Place a small wooden cross on the table and an open Bible. Have sufficient 'free hug cards' on the table in a small pile.

Some slides have also been prepared for use on powerpoint. (See CD)

Songs/Choruses

Great is Thy faithfulness SASB 33
The Potter's hand Source 640
Because He lives Chorus Source 701

Scripture Readings

Philippians 4:19 and Hebrews 6: 18-19 (KJV)

Poems

Refer to "Somebody Loves You" by Helen Steiner Rice
Century Hutchinson Australia Pty Ltd
16-22 Church Street
Hawthorn, Vic 3122
Copyright Fleming H. Revell Co 1976
ISBN 0 09 130660 4

Life with Christ is an endless hope, without him a hopeless end. *Anonymous*

Hope will give us courage in the darkest night
Faith and love will make the heavy burden light
Let us then be cheerful and our hearts assure
That the gracious promises of God are sure.
Albert Orsborn (1886-1967) SASB 755 (v3)

Participation Ideas

1. Random Acts of Kindness

This is doing something nice and unexpected for someone without them knowing. This small act which can be of little financial cost to ourselves can generate feelings of hope and encouragement within others. RAKS can also have a snowball effect! These are just some suggestions – can you suggest others?

- Place a nice soap and hand towel or some nice flowers near the washbasin in the ladies washroom at Church.
- Share flowers from your garden.
- Make or purchase a little card and add words of hope and encouragement. Perhaps include a verse of scripture. Place it in someone's mail box at church or give to someone you know who you feel needs it today.
- Make an extra batch of biscuits or increase that casserole a little to share with a friend or neighbour who needs a hand.
- Allow someone to go before you in line at the checkout. Open a door and hold it to allow someone through before you.
- Leave a small chocolate on someone's desk at work.

2. Make a card

Maybe there is someone who can share their skills in showing others how to make an appropriate card to use as a Random Act of Kindness.

At the end of the segment, each lady should receive a free hug card from the table with the suggestion that it be used often and at least once before they leave today.

Competition: (See CD)

Gift of Hope

Depending on number attending, this can be done either in groups or one large group.

Using a pen and paper write down the left side of the page GIFT OF HOPE using one letter per line. Then using each letter, write an appropriate word in relation to sharing the Gift of Hope with others: e.g.

G	God
I	Inspiration
F	Faith
T	Tender
O	Offering
F	Friendship
H	Helping
O	Overcoming
P	Purpose
E	Eternal

Follow this activity with some discussion.

Devotional Message (See CD for full notes)

A Blessing:

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by His grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- Invite a speaker from a service that offers hope to people.
E.g. Salvo Care Line, Employment Plus.
Hope For Life Suicide Prevention.
<http://suicideprevention.salvos.org.au/>
Contact the service for brochures to distribute.
- Invite a new Christian to share their personal testimony sharing of their newfound hope in Christ.
- DVD Braver, Stronger, Wiser – contact Communications Department (9233 9690) for free CD's to distribute as gifts to your women... or just play segments of the DVD as part of your meeting. This is an excellent resource prepared particularly for our rural folk... it can be used to provide support to people facing depression.

The gift of chocolate – can change the world!

Robyn Evans – Parramatta
Mel Cotton – Auburn



To make this weeks session a little bit different, you could send out invitations inviting people to a chocolate party – this is also a week that people might want to bring friends along. (See CD for invite design)

Let's look today at the power that chocolate has in society. For many of us chocolate is a treat, a luxury and something we love to eat, cook with and share with others. Chocolate is a symbol of love and affection throughout many events in the year. It can say many things like "I'm Sorry", "I care", "I Love you", "Hope you feel better soon". Chocolate in so many ways can be a blessing to many people in our lives, whom we choose to share chocolate with.

Chocolate is a lot of fun.

So to have a little fun why don't you play a chocolate game or make a treat. (See CD for instructions/recipes)

For many years, Chocolate (and other foods) has caused great hardship and difficulties for those living in Africa. Chocolate is made from Cocoa, which is largely grown in developing countries such as Africa where the slave trade is still a growing problem. We have the ability to do something about it.

So how can chocolate change the world?

Fairtrade Concept: See powerpoint presentation on CD.

In Australia, these problems seem so far away, but actually by making an ethical consumer choice, we can impact the lives of many people across the globe without even leaving our neighbourhood.

Fairtrade doesn't just give people good jobs, it gives them freedom to be able to have resources and facilities, many of which we take for granted in a country like ours. It also guarantees that people are not in slave like conditions, but they get paid fair prices for their work and are able to support their families.

Why is this something we want to be a part of?

If we look at themes throughout the Bible, justice is a common one, one that we are meant to take part in and one that God instructs his people to do. Let's look at Jeremiah.

"A constant theme among the prophets such as Jeremiah is linking knowing God to doing Justice. The prophetic understanding is that you cannot claim to know God if you are not committed to doing justice.

'Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts

boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight," declares the Lord. (Jeremiah 9:23, ESV)

If we want to know and understand God, we must understand his passion for justice. This is radically different from the modern thought of knowing God that is typically expressed in contemporary worship." (Excerpt taken from 'Just Imagine the world for God' by Danielle Strickland and Campbell Roberts, 2008, p.25)

How can we develop our relationship with God to reflect his heart for justice?

A relationship with God is a very personal thing. It is something that we often seek but can't always predict. But that verse in the bible that we often pray, "transformed into his image" (2 Corinthians 3:18) can start to become very real to us as we look at what it means for us, for our families and for our world. As we are "transformed into his image" many of those things begin to change, subtly but have great influence. Many things can be said here, but when we are talking about justice there maybe a few ways that our lives can reflect God's desire for justice.

Maybe you can ask yourselves these questions.

What areas of justice do I really feel strongly about?

Am I willing to serve in areas of justice?

Am I good at giving grace to those who need it most? (many hurting people in our communities will need plenty of it)

What do I need to change to be God's hands and feet in my community?

"As God works in our lives, turning us into fully devoted followers of Christ and therefore into progressively more compassionate people, many of society's ills should break our hearts and prompt us to action of some sort." (Bill Hybels, Holy Discontent, 2007, p.52)

What can we do in Australia, in our homes or work places?

See CD for promo material/information and powerpoint presentation.

Where can you get the products from?

See CD for "How To Act!" and "Good Chocolate Guide". (Print off for people to keep)

What are some of the changes we have already seen around the Globe?

Video

See CD for OXFAM video.

Note that the information on this video is current and may not be accurate after a year. Check the Oxfam website for updated resources)

We can PRAY!

Pray for those who are victims of injustice.

Pray for their freedom, for peace and transformation in their situations.

Pray for the perpetrators that their hearts will be softened.

Pray for the families of victims and

Pray that we will be the voice for the voiceless.

Prayer: Franciscan Benediction

(See CD for prayer design hand out – suggestion to double side it with the poem about chocolate)

As you give out Chocolate and make these consumer choices, remember that your choices can Change the World.

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- Hugs for Chocolate Lovers – by Dawn M. Brandon & Tammy Bicket
- Good News!! Cadbury Australia and Fairtrade Labelling Australia & New Zealand announced in August 2009 its plans for the nations' favourite chocolate, Cadbury Dairy Milk®, to achieve Fairtrade Certification by Easter 2010. For further information please go to:
<http://www.cadbury.com.au/About-Cadbury/News.aspx?newsID=45>
<http://www.fairtrade.com.au/cadbury-announcement/>

The gift of life

Major Cheralynne Pethybridge – DHQ Newcastle & Central NSW Division



John 10:10b

Décor

'Life Be In It' campaign pictures. 'Jesus. All About Life' material. Publications that can enhance the spiritual life e.g. Bibles, devotional books, CD's. DVD's etc

Introduction of theme

In 1975 Australia launched 'The Life Be In It' campaign. This campaign was aimed at promoting healthy and balanced lifestyles in everyday Australians. The main figure in these campaigns was the cartoon character known as Norm. He and his family were shown getting 'out and about' and generally making the most out of life. It's interesting to note that the activities they entered into were not extreme, just everyday things that the average person could relate to. As God's creation we too need to make the most out of life physically, but more importantly we need to know the difference that Jesus makes to our life. He has given us The Gift of Life and we need to embrace that gift by making the most of all that He offers.

Songs.

SASB 371 O what a wonderful, wonderful day.

The Source 101 Give thanks with a grateful heart.

Prayer

Ask women to share about the activities that they do that enhance their lives.

There is an understandable preoccupation in most western countries with life. This ranges from health issues to recreational pursuits. These issues are still pertinent in war torn and developing countries however the main focus is day to day survival. Life expectancy can fall due to problems like famine, war, disease and poor health. Improvements in health and welfare increase life expectancy. The higher the life expectancy, the better shape a country is in. Life expectancy rose rapidly in the twentieth century due to improvements in public health, nutrition and medicine. It's likely that life expectancy of the most developed countries will slowly advance and then reach a peak in the range of the mid-80s in age. Life expectancy is a good indicator of a country's standard of living and overall health.

In Australia, life expectancy has increased significantly over the past century, reflecting the considerable falls in mortality rates, initially from infectious diseases and, in later years, from cardiovascular disease. Based on the latest mortality rates, a boy born in 2006 would be expected

to live to 78.7 years on average, while a girl would be expected to live to 83.5 years. Unfortunately this is not the case for Indigenous Australians as they can expect to live up to twenty years less than non-Indigenous Australians. Indigenous life expectancy is so low because Aboriginal health standards in Australia are now so bad that 45% of Aboriginal men and 34% of women die before the age of 45. 71% die before they reach the age of 65. According to the United Nations, the quality of life of Aboriginal people is the second worst on the planet – only China rates worse.

Life expectancy statistics.

'Currently, microstates Andorra, San Marino, and Singapore along with Japan have the world's highest life expectancies (83.5, 82.1, 81.6 and 81.15, respectively). Unfortunately, AIDS has taken its toll in Africa, Asia and even Latin America by reducing life expectancy in 34 different countries (26 of them in Africa). Africa is home to the world's lowest life expectancies with Swaziland (33.2 years), Botswana (33.9 years) and Lesotho (34.5 years) rounding out the bottom. Between 1998 and 2000, 44 different countries had a change of two years or more of their life expectancies from birth and 23 countries increased in life expectancy while 21 countries had a drop.'
Information courtesy of Matt Rosenberg.
Aug 19 2007

Poem - attributed to Mother Teresa – See CD

This could be made into a powerpoint presentation.

Bible Reading. Psalm 36:5-9

The Bible Society in conjunction with many denominations (including The Salvation Army), has commenced a campaign aimed at sharing the life changing message of Jesus with the community. Jesus. All About Life encourages people to seek for themselves the truth of the Bible and who Jesus is. The Life Be In It campaign wanted people to become more active and healthy. This campaign wants people to look at the spiritual dimension of life. It's a starting point for Christians to share their faith and show others what it is to have a full life in Christ.

Song

SASB 394 What a wonderful change in my life...

Participation

Ask a couple of women to share the difference Jesus makes in their lives and how they go about strengthening this relationship.

Message (See CD for full notes)

Vocal The Source 1105 All my days... (Beautiful Saviour)

An alternative is to have someone read the words.

Prayer

Song The Source 465 Such love...

Song SASB 274 He came to give us life...

Benediction

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- Invite a guest speaker to talk about organ donation. See website www.organdonor.com.au and note the option "Request a Speaker"
- Invite a recipient of an organ donation to share their story.
- Play a segment from the TV show The Gift of Life – hosted by Tara Brown of 60 Minutes. This show (8 episodes) screened in the later part of 2009 on Channel 9. Use the following link for more information www.throng.com.au/the-gift
- Use the following link to view a 3 minute video produced by students at St. Therese Catholic Primary School in Sydney. The students were inspired by their 6 year old class mate who suffers from a heart condition. The DVD entitled "Kiara's Gift" promotes organ donation and received a Science Award. <http://www.cathnews.com/article.aspx?aeid=15906>
- Invite someone who has recovered from a critical illness to share their story.
- Invite a mother with a brand new baby in the corps to visit your meeting – present her with a basket of baby gifts to welcome the new gift of life.

The gift of hugs

Major Rowena Smith – THQ



This meeting incorporates the idea of being embraced by God and also encourages us to remember that God can use us to encourage and uplift someone by giving them a hug.

It is not intended that this meeting become a hug fest... since it is important to remember that some people are not inclined that way. We need to be sensitive not to put people in an uncomfortable place. None of the following program suggestions require the physical expression of hugging.

Décor

On the main table, display 4 medium sized gift bags in different colours with coloured tissue paper "foofed" out the top. Bags are placed side by side in one row. Each bag has one of the following letters of the word HUGS attached to the front – Each bag contains a gift to be used later during the competition. See CD for template of letters and suggestions for gifts.

Other optional décor ideas:

Display sculptures/ornaments of people hugging e.g. from the Willow Tree series (children, adults, parents)

Display laminated posters on small metal stands. Posters feature quotes about hugs and people/animals embracing. Stands can be purchased for around \$3 at Bargain Stores.

See CD for posters and sayings to print and laminate.

Other equipment required if using recorded music, powerpoint or playing video clips as suggested: Laptop, data projector, screen, wireless broadband modem, speakers, leads, power board, CD player.

Program Suggestions

Introduction

Refer to Google. Search HUG and use information on Wikipedia. The free encyclopaedia. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hug - 26k

Songs

Pick and choose from the following suggestions

From the SASB

Ch 163 He's the same today. (In his arms of love enfolds me)

768 Leaning on the everlasting arms

60 esp. v4 The arms of love that compass me would all mankind embrace

337 esp. v2 Threw his loving arms around me

645 esp. v3 In his arms he'll take and shield thee.

Other sources

Draw me close to you (to feel the warmth of your embrace)
The Source 2 # 674

He touched me – William Gaither – Festival of Faith
songbook #15

Power of your love (hold me close, let your arms surround
me) The Source 3#1534

Competition

This is just a bit of silly fun. No knowledge or skill is required. It's all guesswork so anyone can win. (See CD for instructions)

Quotes about hugs

See CD for handout or slides on powerpoint.

Medical benefits of Hugging

The Hug Therapy Book by Kathleen Keating. <http://www.bykathleenkeating.com/work1.htm>

Short video clip

We've all heard of a bear hug. But what does a lion hug look like? Play this 38 sec video clip which features a lion embracing its keeper. The two have a strong bond since the lion was rescued from malnourishment 6 years before. As the clip is brief you might like to play it a second time. Contact Major Rowena Smith who can email the clip to you... alternatively play the clip live. Use a wireless broadband modem and log on to YouTube then type in Lion Hug or use the following address. www.youtube.com/watch?v=biclwwQhNtc

It would be preferable to have a practice run first before you present this segment.

Prayer Activity

See CD to try one of the 2 suggestions

Reading

From one of the Hugs from Heaven series. (See CD for titles)

Poem

"His Arms" by Bruce D. Prewer (See CD)

Slide show

A powerpoint presentation of people hugging. Includes quotes. (See CD – duration 4.45 mins)

Click start and remaining slides will proceed automatically. For background music, you could use one of the following recordings: (be ready to replay music as these songs will finish before the slide show) Fade music out on last slide.

When I need love – Leo Sayer (duration 4.17mins)

All you need is love – the Beatles (duration 3.15mins)

Reach out and touch somebody's hand – Diana Ross (duration 3min)

Include an educational segment

Provide information on one of the following topics which gives a different slant on "The Gift of Hugs". (See CD)

The Free Hugs Campaign

Christian the Lion

The Shawl Ministry

Devotional Message

- Hold Me – It Hurts (See CD)
- Or National Hug Week by Bob Street (See CD)



The gift of sight

Lyn Gilmour – Gosford Corps



Display

Have on display as much as you can think of to do with sight; e.g. Posters from optometrist, glasses, craft magnifying glass, tablet packet with Braille on the side etc

Humour (See CD)

Prayer Time.

Special prayers for those who are sight impaired, especially those from within your group.

Suggested Songs

- Song 80 HLSB "O Lord my God"
- Song 21 HLSB "For the beauty of the earth."
"Turn your eyes upon Jesus"
- Song 26 SASB "All things bright & beautiful"

Possible Games (See CD for 4 suggestions)

Share

Members could share a moment in their lives when they saw something beautiful e.g. their baby's face or a landscape scene.

Talk

An eagle can see about 2 kms, assuming there is plenty of sunshine. This compares with about 500 metres for the human eye.

Eagles have 2 sets of eyelids to protect their extremely keen eyesight. One set is used while the bird is stationary, but the moment the eagle is airborne, a second set of eyelids drop over the eyes protecting the bird's eyes from rushing wind when they dive for their prey, or from trees, bushes or even the prey itself.

We have 2 sets of eyelids also. Our eyes see what is going on around us, they see nature, family, friends and what we look at daily. We also have Spiritual eyes – for our journey with Christ.

Sometimes, like the horse in our humorous story, we don't look so good. We have trouble seeing God in the events of our lives. We look at things with our worldly eyes, rather than our Spiritual eyes.

Matthew 13:16,17 says, "Happy are your eyes because they see. I tell you sincerely, many Prophets and many of God's people have longed to see what you see and never saw it."

The eyes are very important for us to connect with the world around us. They can take in an enormous amount of information. The eye is the camera of our bodies. Yet, some people don't have good eyesight, or any eyesight. We have people in our own Home League who are vision impaired.

Helen Keller was born on 27th June 1880 with all her senses, but contracted a virus which led to her losing her sight and hearing when she was 19 months old. The doctors called her illness a brain fever. As she recovered from the illness it became apparent she was deaf and blind. Did you know her carer, Ann Sullivan was sight impaired as well? Here we have 2 remarkable women who achieved an enormous number of positive things while living with a disability. Helen Keller's story has fascinated many through the years.

Try to imagine life without sight, no colours, no images, no knitting, TV or even seeing the face of your loved one.

Sight is valuable. Jesus reached out His hand and restored sight to the blind man. Those around him tried to explain away the miracle, but the blind man said, "This one thing I know – once I was blind, but now I see."

Meditation

How do you see things? Some people see an oil slick in the gutter, others see the rainbow. Think about these things...

No answers required, just think about your answers...

What do you see when you look at....

An old man or woman shuffling along – the burden they are to themselves and family OR the beauty of a golden age?

A baby lying innocently in a pram – the cost of another mouth to feed OR the miracle of birth?

The results of a bushfire – destruction and charring OR the opportunity for new life?

A beautiful sunrise – another long day OR opportunities and life?

A pile of washing up – work to be done OR a hearty meal just eaten

A shopping trolley – an unpleasant task ahead OR thankful for supermarkets full of stock?

What do you see – some of us see a lonely lady and contact her. Some see trouble and try to help.

Ask God to help you with those who you don't see "eye to eye" with. Look a person in the eyes and you can learn a lot about them. As you see other people around you, try to look at the world through their eyes. Try to see them through the eyes of Jesus. Take a little time this week to spend some focused time with someone. Look them in the eye and communicate with them, trying to see life through their eyes.

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- Invite a speaker from the Royal Blind Society
Fred Hollows Foundation or Guide Dogs Association
- Invite an optometrist

The gift of hospitality

Marie Walker – Gladstone Corps

For this function provide FOUR small tables for demonstrations.

Organise for FOUR capable women to demonstrate a table setting, a floral centrepiece, napkin folding, simple home-made invitations.

Opening Devotions

Inspiration for this meeting came from my Quiet Time when I was challenged to step outside my circle of friends and invite two single mums to lunch – mums whose social life was non-existent, and whose friends were few. The reward was mine! Leader to invite her ladies to accept this challenge.

Scripture

Luke 12:12-14 (Good News)

“When you give a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your rich neighbours – for they will invite you back, and in this way you will be paid for what you did. When you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind; and you will be blessed, because they are not able to pay you back. God will repay you on the day the good people rise from death.”

Key thought

“If you give even a cup of cold water to one of the least of my followers, you will surely be rewarded”.
(Matthew 10:42)

Better still, heat the water and add a tea bag! (Words of a past C.O)

“Remember that the person who plants FEW seeds will have a SMALL crop; the one who plants MANY seeds will have a LARGE crop... for God loves the one who gives gladly” (2 Corinthians 9:6-7 GN)

On a lighter note –

Hospitality is making people feel at home when that is where you wish they were!!!

Blooper in a Church newsletter: The church will host an evening of fine dining, rich entertainment and gracious hostility. (Heaven forbid)

Interaction

Invite the ladies to sit in small groups and pass on a tried and proven household hint. In the actual act of offering hospitality, this would easily fall into place.

Share a favourite recipe in small groups.

Dare the ladies to share in small groups an embarrassing moment they experienced while entertaining. This could indeed be ENTERTAINING!

After group interaction invite the ladies to move from table to table at will and learn something new to help them as they later offer hospitality.

In each instance, be sensitive – keep it simple and non-threatening.

Vocal Solos

(Suggestions only)

No. 661/86 SASB Happy the home when God is there
No. 663/429 SASB Home is home, however lowly.
“... and If I can help somebody as I pass along”

Closing challenge chorus

“Lord, lay some soul upon my heart,
And love that soul through me;
And may I humbly do my part
To win that soul through Thee”.

This meeting, in a nutshell:
I SERVE GOD BY SERVING OTHERS

Helen Steiner Rice writes “Only what we give away enriches us from day to day”.

HAPPY HOSPITALITY-ING!

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for some additional devotional readings
- See CD for reading “They gave her the cold shoulder”.
- See CD for tips on having a welcoming home prepared by Ainsley Poulos*

*Ainsley serves on the eEQUIP Women Organising Team, and is the chair of eEQUIP Ministry Wives- non-denominational ministries to women. These notes were presented at the EQUIP Conference May 23rd – 2009.

The gift of poetry

Colonel Jan Condon – THQ

This meeting is designed to be very interactive – so there is not a lot of substance suggested here. You will be surprised how well women will cooperate and you may even discover some hidden talents in your group. The women got so involved in this meeting that I had to run it over a second week.

Participation

Invite women to bring along Poetry books
Ask women to recite a poem – maybe from school days
Ask women to share about their favourite poem

If possible have a display of poetry/verse around the meeting room.

Participation

1. “Rhyming Game”

Play this in small groups of 3 or 4. Have a selection of words on a card. Take one word at a time and ask the group to write down as many words as possible that rhyme with the word e.g. Rain, bell, creek, day. Have a prize for the group who get the most in the time.

2. “Write a Limerick”

You may need to remind the women how to start the limerick – ask them to write one and give a prize for the most humorous.

3. “Charades”

Ask the women to mime the title of a poem or first line of a poem or nursery rhyme. This can be very humorous.

4. “Write a Poem” as a group

Choose a subject e.g. School days, a season and then go round the group and ask them to share what they feel about the chosen subject in one line.

Write these on the board and then when everyone has contributed read the whole verse/poem out.

5. “The Ten Commandments” in rhyme – maybe this could be produced as a bookmark and given to the women.

Thou shalt have no gods but me
Before no idol bow the knee
Take not the name of God in vain
Nor dare the Sabbath day profane
Give both thy parents honour due
Take heed that thou no murder do
Abstain from words and deeds unclean
Nor steal though thou art poor and mean
Nor make a wilful lie nor love it
What is thy neighbour’s – do not covet

6. “Nursery Rhyme game”

Divide the group into teams and ask them to sing a nursery rhyme and then the next group must sing a different one. If they repeat one already used, their team is eliminated.

7. You could also play a game of Pictionary – get women to draw the first line or title of a poem and have the others guess which one it is.

8. You could check out a web site – www.poetryteachers.com – for other ideas on the Gift of Poetry day.

9. You could also compose a quiz based on poetry/ nursery rhymes etc.

Devotions

The Psalms are the most notable book of poetry in the Bible. These were written during times of celebration, sadness, absolute desolation and brokenness.

You may like to choose one particular Psalm to highlight for the devotions or choose verse from several Psalms that speak to a chosen theme for the day.

There are many images in the Psalms that you could use.

Another suggestion is to allow the women to share their favourite Psalm and why it is their favourite.

Songs

I found that there was very little time for singing but you could invite members to choose favourite songs or choruses to sing on this occasion – songs and choruses being a form of poetry

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for Home Grown poetry (poems written by women in our territory)
- See CD for poetry by Bruce D. Prewer

The gift of hospitality

June Wait – Chatswood Corps
(Ladies' Evening Fellowship)

“Dinner Time” at Ladies’ Evening Fellowship

This evening is arranged around the theme of Dinner Parties. It is designed to be a ‘fun’ evening, fast moving, with both hands-on and listening activities. Ladies can also taste-test food, take copies of the recipes away with them and collect a few different ideas for an entertaining evening at home. The evening should finish with a devotional segment based on the concept of spiritual food.

We included a display of special tea towels on the display boards around the room to make a simple display and add colour and interest to the background.

(See CD for suggested meeting plan)

The readings within this evening fellowship are about the history of our food traditions and are interspersed throughout the evening to add interest and sometimes humour. All can be found on the internet. See CD for Readings. See CD for references for web addresses.

On Arrival

Have welcome drinks available on arrival. We also had an appetizer – Cob Loaf Dip – which was included in our

Quiz

Our quiz was pinned around the room before everyone arrived. Ladies could wander around, filling in the answers, whilst having a welcome drink and appetizer and also taking the chance to look at the table layouts. Quiz answer sheets were waiting at the Registration Table when ladies arrived. Answers may be given at an opportune time through the evening.

Our quiz was a series of full-page magazine adverts with the product name removed and the faces of famous chefs, also with names removed.

3 Table Layouts

(See CD for ideas used at Chatswood)

Before everyone arrives, set up an attractive display of dinner tables, laid for special occasions. The tables should include lovely china, cutlery, table centres, serviettes and other items suited to the theme of the table.

Flower Arranging

An idea for a table centerpiece.

A small, well-soaked piece of oasis from a florist shop placed in an attractive bowl is needed for this demonstration. Flowers and greenery, cut to appropriate size before the demonstration, gives ladies the start they

need to try this at home. A demonstrator with at least some expertise is a distinct advantage!

Napkin folding

<http://www.napkinfoldingguide.com/>

This is a fun, hands-on activity. Ensure that every lady has at least two good quality paper serviettes. Instructions for napkin folding are relatively easy to follow and can be found on the internet at the above site. An ‘instructor’ with at least some practice behind them is an advantage!

Taste Testing

A simple entrée, easy to make and easy to serve in small portions, was the beginning of our taste-testing. This was handed out while the ‘cook’ explained the recipe. For this we chose Gazpacho Soup, a recipe which is found in the Women’s Weekly cookbook ‘Best Recipes from The Weekly’ (pub ACP).

The main meal was also chosen for its ease of preparation and serving in small portions to a large group! Our main meal was a Gordon Ramsay recipe of meat balls with sauce and pasta. Again this was handed out whilst the ‘cook’ explained her recipe.

A well-organised kitchen is necessary for this part of the evening! Someone to serve the portions and a couple of people to hand the portions out and then collect the empty plates are vital to direct this without fuss! We used small plastic cups for the cold soup and plastic plates and forks for the main course.

We served Profiteroles for dessert as part of supper at the end of the evening. See CD for recipe.

Devotions

O Taste and See

The theme for devotions will obviously be the choice of the person who conducts this final part of the evening but could be based around the idea of spiritual food. Our theme was “O Taste and See” based on Psalm 34. Psalm 23 “The Lord is my Shepherd” might also be used.

Supper

Tea, coffee and sandwiches and a dessert of Profiteroles (Women’s Weekly cookbook ‘Cooking Class Cookbook’ (pub. ACP).

References - (See CD for list and websites)

Items to take - (See CD for list)

The gift of me

Captain Robyn Black – Glebe Corps

Prepare

Ask the ladies to bring a baby photo of themselves and have a gift box on display with the word 'me' written on it.

Welcome & introduce theme

Have you ever thought of yourself as a 'gift'. The Bible records from the very beginning, that God himself designed each one of us for the purpose of being in relationship with him. The Bible tells us that God "made my whole being; you, God, formed me in my mother's body. I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way. What you have done is wonderful." (Psalm 139: 13-14, NCV)

God formed us, we are not an accident of nature, a coincidence of the cosmos, or a mistake. God formed us. Our arrival in the world may have been a surprise to others, or a much anticipated joy. Our birth may have been surrounded by secrecy, or heralded to the neighbourhood. Our tiny extra mouth to feed may have been viewed as a burden or a blessing. Whatever the case, we were not a surprise to God, and we were not a mistake. He knew all about us, and he loved us even then. And he thought we were wonderful.

Could you repeat those words in your mind, as a prayer
"God, you made my whole being;

You, God, formed me in my mother's body. I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way. What you have done is wonderful, Amen."

Now say those words out loud, and pray together as a group.

Prayer by leader

Song – 179 (SASB) I stand amazed

Baby pictures – who's who – people have to guess who belongs to which photo.

Poem

Are You Dissatisfied with Yourself?
Helen Steiner Rice, from *Loving Promises*, 1981
www.gather.com/viewArticle.jsp?articleId=281474977573496

"The LORD doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7 (New Living Translation)

Song

170 (SASB) – They shall come from the east

Wherever we're from, whatever we've done, whether poor or rich, despised by others or distressed, God loves us.

Coat of arms

Coats of Arms date from the early Middle Ages. In the early twelfth century, helmets and other armour began making it difficult to tell armed warriors apart. The solution was for each knight or soldier to paint something personal on their shield. The symbols on the Coat of Arms, said something about the owner. These designs were important in battle, but they also functioned like team uniforms when knights met in tournaments. Over time, shield emblem designs became enduring symbols of their owners, and of their owners' families.

Coat of Arms Activity

Print a copy of the template for each person (See CD for template). You are going to make your own Coat of Arms – a symbol of who you are, and what's important to you.

Divide the coat of Arms in four sections, and draw symbols or write words in each of the sections about:

A good quality about yourself
The person or people who love you today
Your greatest challenge in life so far
Your hope for the future

A Coat of Arms always has a motto beneath it. A motto encapsulates your motivation or values or intentions. Write out a favourite verse of scripture or promise from scripture, as a motto for life, in the banner below the Coat of Arms.

Song – 506 Lord of Creation (SASB)

Message (See CD for full notes)

Song – 474 (SASB) All to Jesus I surrender or
All that I am, all I can be

Prayer

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- See CD for Love Letter from God with scripture references

The gift of fragrance

Major Maree Strong – DHQ ACT and South NSW Division

This meeting outline could be used for either a Home League style meeting or adapted for an Evening Fellowship. It also incorporates 2 Bible Studies. The content from these studies can be used separately or incorporated in the Home League meeting.

Décor Suggestions

Various perfumes / ornate bottles
Perfumed candles
Fresh flowers
Perfume samples (to give away perhaps)

You can select your favourite flower to use as a theme for decorations, and handouts. You will notice on the Bible Study notes, the use of the frangipani flower as a theme. (See CD)

Introductory Activity

Ask the ladies to think of the gifts of fragrance they have received over the years. Make a list on a whiteboard, overhead or powerpoint.

Highlight the fact that there are numerous sources of fragrance from natural to man made:

Natural – flowers, fruits etc
Man Made – candles, cosmetics, etc

Item of interest: Did you know that you can order on line a special candle called “His Essence”. The advertisement is on a powerpoint slide. (See CD)

Personal Story

Ask a lady to share a story of interest about a gift of fragrance.

Share A Recipe

Prepare a handout of a recipe to share with the ladies. ‘Frangipani Tart’. (See CD)

Someone may like to make this pie prior to the meeting to share for morning or afternoon tea or supper. Make handouts of this recipe and give to each lady.

Songs

A Worship Session entitled “The Fragrance of Christ” has been prepared by Captain Fran Everitt. See CD for the script and also powerpoint slides. You can edit this material to suit your purposes.



Other theme-related songs.

Song 156 (SASB) esp. v3

Song 591 (SASB) esp. v2

Song 38 (SASB) esp. v2

351 (The Source) May our worship be as fragrance

634 (The Source) as I come into your presence (esp v2)

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, there's just something about that name
(Gaither and Gaither)

Idea

Ch 61 (SASB) Come beautiful Christ – change 2nd line to
Release thy fragrance in me.

Ch 43 (SASB) Jesus, lily of the valley – change 2nd line to
Bloom with all your fragrance in the garden of my heart.

Message

“The Gift of Fragrance”

Introduction

The Bible speaks of fragrance or sweet aroma. The expression, “an aroma pleasing to the Lord” is found 24 times in the first four books of the Old Testament, each connected with various types of offerings made to the Lord. In the spiritual sense, it is not the aroma of the offerings themselves that is pleasing to the Lord but the accompanying attitude of heart in the one making the offering or sacrifice.

In the New Testament, the aroma or fragrance is spoken of concerning both Christ and His followers.

1. We may have received beautiful fragrant gifts in our life time for a number of reasons; but the most precious and valuable gift of fragrance we could ever receive is the one offered to us by God – the gift of the ‘fragrance of Christ’.

“...Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.” Ephesians 5:2

Christ’s sacrificial offering of Himself became the “Fragrance of Christ” – the ultimate and most pleasing offering to God.

We are the recipients of this fragrance. This Gift of Fragrance is FOR ME!

2. We are not only a recipient of the Fragrance of Christ but we become the vessel in which the Fragrance is contained. The Fragrance of Christ in us transforms our lives and we each become

“.....living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God—this is your spiritual act of worship” Romans 12:1”

(Free powerpoint slide can be obtained from www.heartlight.org by using the following pathway.

Grahics/Powerpoint/Backgrounds. In the second field, select Romans/click select. Click Romans 12.1)

Not only are we the recipients of the Fragrance of Christ but we are also the vessels of this fragrance. The Fragrance of Christ is FOR ME and is IN ME!

3. If you receive a gift of beautiful fragrance and you never open it, and wear it, it becomes little more than a show object. Christians need to spread the fragrance of Christ around. We become the diffusers or dispensers of this Fragrance to others. We are the Fragrance of Christ to those around us.

“For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.”
2Cor.2:15

(Free powerpoint slide from heartlight.org available. Follow previous pathway for Corinthians 2:15)

Bible Studies

A display of the Gift of Fragrance can be seen in these passages (Study booklets prepared – See CD)

John 12: 1 - 8 The Fragrance of Christ was released through Mary’s sacrificial gift

Philippians 4:10 – 20 The Fragrance of Christ was released through the sacrificial giving of the Christians in Philippi.

Prayer

May you accept the gift of God’s fragrance through accepting Christ as Lord and Saviour. May your life be a vessel of Christ’s fragrance that is released into the world you live in from day to day. May others come to know Jesus through you. Amen.

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- See CD for article “Sweet perfume of happiness”
- Frangipani décor available for loan from DHQ at the SE & I Division

The gift of health

Dr. Wendy Burton (MBBS) – Carina Corps

Note from editor:

These notes are a condensed version of the content submitted by Dr. Wendy Burton. The entire plan is in the format of a powerpoint presentation on the CD included with this manual. You may wish to format the font on the slides. You may even decide not to use certain slides in your meeting and delete them.

The presentation includes a practical element where women make their own stress balls. Instructions and a list of materials are included on slide 7. Depending on time restrictions, you may decide that your group make one ball each and provide 2 other ready-made balls for each person to participate in the juggling activity as suggested on slides 12-13

The presentation also includes 2 video links. Wendy has included her recommendations regarding the use of these. Copyright permission has been given to include this material. You have permission to use these clips in your meeting.

You will require the use of a wireless broadband modem and also a set of speakers, connected to your laptop and data projector.

Slide 1

Created by Dr Wendy Burton (MBBS) for use by the Salvation Army Women's Ministry

May 2009.

The evidence behind the health recommendations comes from the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners Guidelines for preventive activities in general practice, 7th edition, published in April 2009.

Slide 2

Instructions for Leaders:

For this meeting you will need scissors, some good quality balloons (allow 2-4 per participant) some rice or sand, tape measures, a set of bathroom scales, a machine (+/- a nurse or doctor) for measuring Blood Pressure, a calculator, a good sense of humour (for the measuring and the juggling activity) and an internet connection.

You may also want to make a bookmark using some of the wording from Irish Blessing (slides 15 & 16)

Slide 3

I recommend you download the two video links before the presentation so that you can screen them for their suitability for your group and think about discussions that may arise from their viewing. Obviously, depending upon



your facilities, you may or may not be able to show them during the meeting.

Please read through, print a copy of the tables on slides 9 and 10 for each participant, and use this resource as is appropriate for your venue and your group

Slide 14

Note from editor:

This slide includes the first video link which features a lovely reflection entitled "Irish Blessing". Click on to the website at the bottom of the slide. Once the link is activated, click START to activate clip.

http://www.e-water.net/viewflash.php?flash=irishblessing_en

Slide 18

Isaiah 40:28-31

Do you believe this? Is there evidence of this in your life?

Do you let go and let God?

Slide 19

Deuteronomy 30:19

What choices are you making and do they impact negatively or positively upon your health and wellbeing?

Slide 20

For those of you currently walking through the Valley, for whatever reason, stand firm on the promises of God whose grace is sufficient for you (2 Corinthians 12:9) and whose plans are to give you a hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11)

Note from editor:

This slide includes the second video link which features a song entitled "Faith is a Place" by Michael Neale and Jordan Rubin. It is basically the personal testimony of Jordan Rubin who suffered a devastating illness at the age of 19. The song expresses the spiritual journey he took during this time and how he came through to a full recovery. It would be helpful to provide your group with a little more information about his story. Research by using the website suggested on the slide, refer to the menu and click on the option "Jordan Rubin" to view the brief outline Jordan's Incredible Story.

The video clip may be activated by clicking onto the link that appears on Slide 20. To start the clip, click on to the option Super: T1/Lan

<http://www.biblicalhealthinstitute.com/Resources/Media/FaithisaPlaceMusicVideo/tabid/92/Default.aspx>

Slides 21-23

Faith is a Place: A song of faith and hope
Words and music by Michael Neale & Jordan Rubin
Used with permission

Slide 24

Suggestion for closing prayer: Abba Father, we come before you today and thank you for the blessings of life and health. We thank you for science and resources and the many people you equip to lead us through what can be a confusing maze. For those of us who are battling ill health personally or journeying with someone undergoing this battle, we pray that you would place the right people in our path and that we would seek knowledge and wisdom in the choices we make. We thank you for your grace and your sustaining power. Let us never forget that you are intimately acquainted with our journey and our needs. Father, we commit our lives to you in prayer, secure in the knowledge that we are held safe in the Healers hands.

Slide 25

Suggested closing songs:

I'm in his hands

The Potter's hands

Blessed be your name

It is well with my soul

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for some additional devotional readings
- See CD for powerpoint entitled "God's Pharmacy"
- See CD for handout "God's Pharmacy"
- See CD for powerpoint entitled "Check Up" which could be used as a reflection time.
- See CD for article by Major Maree Strong "Holy, Healthy & Happy"
- Helpful website recommended by Dr. Wendy Burton http://www.measureup.gov.au/internet/abhi/publishing.nsf/Content/order_form

The gift of peace

Major Cheryl Carpenter – Dee Why



This plan is presented as a prayer exercise involving 4 prayer stations. Duration - 55 minutes, with an additional 5 minutes to allow the movement between stations.

Décor and Resources

- Serene music playing, all the time in background
- 1 table with candles – scented if available (middle of room) A Cross behind table with yellow or white sheer material flowing down with flowers at the foot of the cross
- Dimmed lighting
- Flowers & wrapped boxes and gift bags with ribbons and bows
- 2 bunches of balloons – pastel colours, blues, pinks, lemons & greens
- DVD: Reflective Worship Series: Use either the following or your own selection
Vol 1 Be Still – Vol 2 Moments or Vol 3 His Peace

3 rotating stations of peace;

Station 1: Reflective Worship DVD

Station 2: A Picture of Peace

Station 3: A Time of Contemplation - Reflecting Me

Stations 1, 2 & 3 happen at the same time. Ladies rotate round the different tables and the sound of a gentle bell indicates time to move to next table. (All stations are 10 minutes)

Station 4: The Cross

All ladies come together at the end of the 3 stations. (This is for the reflective devotion)

Chairs to be circling the Cross and the giving of a gift of peace to each lady at the end.

You will need

- A small gift box – instruction found @ www.do-it-yourself-gifts.com/gift-boxes.html
- A wooden cross – from Koorong (the little hand ones) or make nail ones using glue
- Tissue paper & curling ribbon

Introduction (5 Minutes)

John 16:27 Living Bible

“I am leaving you with a gift- peace of mind and heart! And the peace I give isn’t fragile like the peace the world gives. So don’t be troubled or afraid.”

John 14:27 NKJV

“Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you, not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

We all long for peace. We all long for and want peace



in our minds, in our hearts. We want peace in our family, in our relationships and we all would love peace among nations. Peace is attainable. When you're at peace, there is a sense of stillness. You are hushed, quiet, and at ease. Wholeness and complete surrender reign. Have you discovered this peace in your lives!

Jesus used the word "Shalom" which means "Peace". Most people today don't really understand "peace" as a positive concept, all they know is the negative side of peace.

The definition of peace is:

1. stillness or silence
2. absence of mental anxiety: peace of mind
3. absence of war
4. harmony between people or groups
5. a treaty marking the end of a war
6. law and order within a state: a breach of the peace
7. at peace
8. dead: the old lady is at peace now
9. in a state of harmony or serenity
10. hold or keep one's peace to keep silent
11. keep the peace to maintain law and order [Latin pax]

Collins Essential English Dictionary 2nd Edition 2006 © HarperCollins Publishers 2004, 2006

The Quechua Indians in Ecuador and Bolivia use a word for peace that literally translates, "to sit down in one's heart." For them peace is the opposite of running around in the midst of constant anxieties. The Indians of Mexico define peace as "a quiet heart." Those may be beautiful ways to put it, but they still seem to leave us with only the negative idea that peace is the absence of trouble".

Today we are going to take a journey. Today we are going to discover for ourselves again the Gift of Peace.

Station 1: Reflective Worship (10 minutes) All together

This is used to set the scene and bring an atmosphere of tranquillity, quietness and peace. 10 minutes will give time for 3 maybe 4 scenes from the DVD.

Station 2: A Picture of Peace (10 Minutes)

Printed copies of Reflection required for each person – (See CD)

Chairs around table, digital frame with slide show of water landscape scenes.

Reflection: Sit, read, ponder and reflect on the following, feel the tranquillity, sit down with your heart, a quiet heart and feel God's presence.

Station 3: A time of Contemplation- Reflecting Me (10 Minutes)

Printed copies of question sheet required for each person – (See CD)

Chairs around another table, candles and a basket.

Basket filled with note paper, little Bible encouragements etc

Questionnaire – looking at the absence of conflict. Time to write down thoughts and concerns on our mind, what kind of peace we are striving for.

Station 4: The Cross – Reflective Devotions (15 minutes)

(Soft instrumental music of choice playing in background to continue tranquill atmosphere)

Today we have been on a journey, a journey of discovery. A journey, discovering how to receive, the Gift of Peace. Today in the world in which we live, with the turmoil and troubles of life, peace with God and peace from God is possible. This Gift of Peace only comes from God.

Philippians 4: 6 and 7 says: "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything; tell God your needs and don't forget to thank him for his answers."

When we follow and put into practise what these words are teaching us we will experience God's peace, His peace, a perfect peace that will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus. This is far more wonderful than the human mind can comprehend or even understand.

The secret is in laying our worries and cares at God's feet and leaving them there. The Cross is our source of peace because it was here that Jesus gave us His Gift of Peace. It is only through the Cross, so when you are feeling pushed, anxious, stressed, not sure which way to go, when you are searching for answers, for tranquillity, come to the Cross, sit and rest awhile, sit in His Presence, at His feet and hand over your thoughts and concerns to Him.

You might need to do it again and again... Enjoy having time out with God and enjoy the sense of His peace in your life by letting go of control and giving God the right to be God in all situations. The Gift of Peace comes only when we submit to God. Then and only then can He give us "The Gift of Peace.

Prayer time: DVD Reflective Worship 1: Still -

Give the gift boxes with crosses to ladies as a reminder to go to the foot of the cross – for there is where they can discover the Gift of Peace.

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings

The gift of music

Major Bev McMurray – Stafford Corps

Preparation/Décor:

- A beautifully wrapped box with bow placed on a table for all to see. Inside I would have a musical carousel music box or jewellery box, or baby's music toy... anything which plays a tune. The box could later be unwrapped for all to see the gift inside. I would use one of our children's 'bunnykins' music pieces - but anything would do.
- A display of musical instruments could be set up: piano keyboard, brass instruments, guitar, banjo, kit drums or any percussion instruments, piano accordion, as suggestions.
- A banner made with some music symbols: treble clef, bass clef, notes, (if anyone is gifted to make banners!)

Equipment:

Cassette/stereo player if no pianist

Computer/overhead projector

Video/DVD player

Video or DVD of the 'Sound of Music'

Guests:

Invite someone who could present some items of musical contribution to the meeting: if not from Corps, perhaps from your community:

Pianist, singer, choir (school or seniors, Sweet Adeline Group, or Men's Barber Shop) instrumentalist, guitarist.



Songs:

- I love to sing of the Saviour 40 HLSB 678NTB
- Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord HH
- I want to sing it 170 Chorus SASB
- I'm going to make my life into a melody (a symphony of grace) 858 SASB

Scripture:

These could be typed on small bits paper for people to read
Psalm 100, 1 Samuel 18: 6, Luke 15: 25, Psalm 96:1, Psalm 92, Psalm 81

Games:

1. Pass the Parcel (unwrap the gift): With each layer of paper unwrapped, a new song is revealed which the ladies sing together
2. Name that song. The piano to play tunes and stop! Someone identify the song.

If a pianist is not available a tape could be made of snippets of songs which could be played and stopped

Karaoke: For the fun loving group: a Karaoke DVD could be hired to see who are the 'out going' ones!

3. Celebrity Heads: Headbands placed on three or four players, with names of music stars. They do not know who they represent. The players take turns to ask the congregation one question at a time, about who they are, to try to identify who they are. eg: Am I male?, Do I sing?, Am I a rock singer?, Am I a ballad singer?, Do I play the violin? If they get the answer right, they can ask a second question. If they don't, the next player has a turn. The first player to guess you they are is the winner.

Suggestions; Frank Sinatra, Andre' Rieu, Barbra Streisand, Pink

Quiz:

Unjumble the styles of music. (See CD for handout)

Devotion: (See CD for full message)

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings

The gift of words

Major Joanne Slater – THQ

Introduction

Words are a very powerful way of communication in many forms. We may choose to use words through speaking, writing, messaging, emails, skywriting.

Do we consider the words we choose to use? Are they going to communicate exactly what we want to say or need to say? Words we use can be a gift given to a person. Words can change a person's life.

"Pleasant words are like honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the bones". Proverbs 16:24.

Preparation

Ask the ladies to come prepared to share about an occasion when a special word was shared with them that gave them great encouragement – through a letter, card, email, phone call.

Place enlarged words of encouragement around the walls. Choose a verse of Scripture, print it and place it near the door way where the ladies will enter so that it can be seen right at the beginning of the day. Proverbs 16:24. (See CD)

This also could be made into a bookmark to handout to your ladies. (See CD)

Suggested Songs

Wonderful words of life.	HLSB 94
I want to tell what God has done.	HLSB 50
If human hearts are often tender.	HLSB 37

Participation

Ladies share of a time they were given a special word of encouragement.

Quiz

Match the verses of Scripture to the correct Scripture reference. (See CD)

Role Play

Ask two ladies prior to the day of the meeting to prepare a small role play –

One character shares a problem – the other character shares words of encouragement resulting in a positive outcome. (This role play would be used as an introduction to devotions. Allow the ladies to prepare this in their own words as they will choose a subject that will be relevant for them.)

Devotions

See CD for full notes

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- See CD for "He's Got the Gift of The Gab" by James Northey
- See CD for "Watch your P's and Q's" by James Northey
- See CD for "The Power of Words" – (UK Resource)



The gift of family

Major Rowena Smith – THQ

Décor

Create a family tree by displaying a small tree (real) in a gift box with bright tissue paper “foofed” out of the top of the box. Decorate box with a bow. Each woman writes her family name on a card (shaped like a gift) and hangs it on the tree. (See CD for template). Surround tree with family photos in frames brought in by the women.

Program suggestions

1. Songs - choose from the Family Worship section of SASB. Songs 659-664
2. Prayertime.
Use prayers on CD Selected Prayers – Home, Family and Community. Pray specifically for families in the Corps with children – babies to university age. Write their names on individual pieces of paper and place in a gift box. Ladies select one slip of paper and pray specifically for that family. Encourage them to continue supporting this family in prayer for the following week. Provide all women with a letter of encouragement to send to their “selected” family during the week. See CD for template.
3. Poem (see CD – Joys of Home Life by Bruce D. Prewer)
4. Competition.
Identify the celebrity families and mothers. (some real and some from TV shows) See list of suggestions on CD. Search Google for images of the families to include on powerpoint slides or print pictures on paper and place around the room. Women walk around to view pictures and record their answers.
5. You tube video clip.
Log on to You Tube to view the song and story about “The Family Of God” by Bill and The Homecomin Crew featuring The Gaither Family. Duration 7.07 minutes including an inspiring testimony and song.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=oH783EfujsM
6. Participation – Share family photographs
7. Guest
Invite a leader from the Corps Playgroup/Mainly Music Program to share about the ministry to community families.
8. Find My Family
Record a segment from the TV series “Find My Family” and replay to the group.
9. Guest speaker
Invite a speaker from Family Tracing Services or contact the department at THQ and request some information about their service.
10. Testimony
Ask someone to share their testimony on the topic “I’m glad I’m a part of the family of God”.
11. Humour
Funny answers given by children to questions about Mothers. See CD for powerpoint and handout. See CD also for funny quotes about children. Also check out YouTube for a funny clip called “I am my own Grandpa”. There are 2 versions www.youtube.com/watch?v=rXU-ZdmzNmo and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W7x1ETPkZsk>. Search Google for the lyrics.
12. New Baby
Invite a corps mother and her new baby to the meeting and present her with a gift basket of baby items.
13. Devotions
Choose from the readings on CD
14. Concluding activity.
Remove “gift” cards from display tree. Place in gift box. Each woman selects a card and prays for that family during the week.

Additional ideas (See CD)



The gift of flowers

Major Rowena Smith – THQ

God waits to win back his flowers as gifts from man's hands.

Rabindranath Tagore, Stray Birds, 1916
www.quotegarden.com

A special feature of this meeting involves an Act of Worship which offers women the opportunity to express adoration by bringing the gift of a flower to the foot of the cross. The script provided on the CD (Intro to Act of Worship) will explain how this proceeds. Flowers are distributed as women arrive. Choose either gerberas, roses or frangipani. (See CD for more details regarding the flowers required.)

Décor

The décor is designed to be used during the Act of Worship. (See CD for instructions).

Intro to Act of Worship

See CD for full script and powerpoint.

Other possible program ideas

Suggest that the women might like to wear something floral on this day.

Songs

I come to the garden alone HLSB 36
Jesus lily of the valley HLSB ch 20
Thank you Lord SASB 552
God make my life a little flower SASB 838 v2

Educational Segment

1. Olympic Bouquets. (See CD)
2. The culture of giving Hawaiian Leis (3 useful websites)
www.aloha-hawaii.com/hawaii/flower+leis/
www.hawaiiflowerlei.com/leitradition.aspx
www.flowerhawaii.com/hawaiian_flower_leis.htm

Humour

See CD for some jokes. You might also like to show a short scene from the DVD series "Keeping Up Appearances" featuring Hyacinth Bouquet (properly spelt "Bucket")

Competition (See CD for 2 options)

Craft Activity

Flower gift bags (See CD Bags, Boxes and Bows)

Special Guest

Invite a local florist to demonstrate her skill or invite a corps person with this gift to show some arrangements.

Quotes about Flowers

(See CD for powerpoint or handout) Use your choice of recorded reflective music as accompaniment to the audiovisual.

Reading

Share a reading from Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul. 101 Stories to sow seeds of Love, Hope and Laughter.

Time of Reflection/Appeal

This could be included if roses are your choice for the Act of Worship. Use the song "Above all" on DVD. Women receive a single artificial rose with card attached with the words "Like a rose trampled to the ground etc..."

Bundles of about 7 roses can be bought for \$2 at bargain stores.

Devotional thought

(See CD for 2 options)

Act of kindness

Women take the flowers home to give away to someone else. (See CD- Flowers for Act of Worship – Further Use of Flowers)

Provide cards (see CD) pre-cut ribbon and hole punch.



The gift of laughter

Major Rowena Smith – THQ

Decor

On the main table, assemble a collection of gift boxes or bags (various sizes) some plain colours, some featuring smiley faces. Coloured tissue paper “foofed” out of the top of box/bag. One box to contain jokes printed on slips of paper to be distributed later in the meeting. Women could be invited to wear a funny hat eg. made from balloons. Some women might have clown dolls to add to the display.

Preparation

Organize your own collection of jokes for the participation segment. Put in box/bag as described in Décor.

Program ideas

1. Introduction
(obtain excellent information from helpguide.org/life/humor_laughter_health.htm)
2. Benefits of laughter (see same website for useful information)



3. Educational segment - Information about Patch Adams, a medical doctor and a clown who believes that laughter, joy and creativity are an integral part of the healing process. Dr. Adams founded the Gesundheit Institute and has devoted 30 years of his life to changing America's health care system which he described as expensive and elitist.
See www.patchadams.org Click on "Vision" for some history and also "The Real Patch Adams" for some helpful information.
4. Show a segment from the movie Patch Adams. Alternatively view the movie trailer (2 mins 7 secs) on You Tube using a broadband modem to play the clip live. (Speakers will be needed)
5. Present some information about Clowning in Children's Hospitals. Check out this excellent website about The Humour Foundation which also includes images and video. www.humourfoundation.com.au/
If your corps is in the city you might be able to organize a guest speaker. Another good website is www.smileday.com.au/
Another contact could be Debra Fowler - Public Relations Officer The Children's Hospital at Westmead Tel: 9845 3584 e-mail: DebraF@chw.edu.au
6. Show a scene from Mary Poppins featuring Uncle Albert singing "I love to laugh" (8 mins) www.youtube.com/watch?v=gx7lz5X2vKk
7. Show a scene from a comedy show. I suggest "Keeping Up Appearances" – to enjoy the hilarious antics of Hyacinth Bucket (or "Bouquet" as she insists). Another hilarious clip could be from the movie Mrs. Doubtfire.
8. Include some funny clips – either as a bracket or spread them out throughout the meeting. Rowena Smith may be able to email a small collection to you, including a gorgeous clip of 4 quadruplets giggling in unison, cradled by their mother... it's so infectious.
9. Quotes about laughter. (see handout on CD and powerpoint presentation) Choose some suitable music to play in the background as the slides are viewed.
10. Participation – women read a joke selected from the gift box on main table.
11. See CD for some humour from children. Use humorous segment in Gifts from Childhood (submitted by Gillian Sweeting) and use the powerpoint. This features hilarious responses by Catholic primary school children in a test about the old and new testament. This could be followed by some interesting information about a real-life laughing nun – Sister Angelica Menta who is known as the Fun Nun. She promotes laughter as a pathway to God. Use www.superbspeakers.com/ to obtain a photo of Sister Angelica and for information about her see this website – www.acfnewsourc.org/religion/laughing_nun.html
12. Practical jokes – could be purchased from a joke/toy shop and demonstrated through the meeting.
13. Humorous poems. Eg poems written by Pam Ayres. Ask a "theatrical" person from your group to dress in costume to read the poem. Alternatively recordings are available from ABC shops.
14. Read a segment from one of Barbara Johnson's books. This author is well known for her humorous personal accounts despite having endured some very tragic personal experiences.
15. Competition – Identify the comedians (past and present). See CD for suggested list. Search Google for images of these celebrities to include on powerpoint slides for women to identify.
16. Humorous skit.
17. Songs – Positive "happy" songs.
Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag
When you're smiling/laughing the whole world smiles with you
Song 387 SASB v3 substitute "gladness" for "laughter"
Song 389 SASB substitute "singing, singing, singing" for "smiling, laughing, singing"
Songs 340, 394, 395
18. Laughter in Scripture. Job 8:21, Psalm 126:2, Psalm 100:1, Luke 6:21
19. Devotional -
See CD for 2 suggested readings OR
Show a segment from the comedy "Bruce Almighty" or "Evan Almighty". Follow this with a spiritual lesson from the segment just viewed.
Google "Spiritual Application for Bruce Almighty" and click on the site entitled "Christian Bible Studies".

The gift of memory

Major Rowena Smith – THQ

This topic has many possibilities. You might even like to span it out over 2 meetings.

Décor

Cover main table with black cloth – Arrange gift boxes/bags (various sizes) at different levels.

Labels are attached (See CD for templates) including Places, Faces, Names, Stories, Holidays, Dates, Friends, Smells, Songs, Scripture, Fashions, Celebrations.

Some of these labels may be focussed on during the meeting.

If possible try to use boxes/bags with patterns/designs that represent the label to be attached.

If you can't find something suitable for some labels – just use bright plain coloured boxes/bags.

Special feature

A special feature of this meeting is a children's story book written by Australian author Mem Fox. It is a truly delightful story and well worth sharing the story and the background to the book, with your group. (See CD for more details)

Morning Tea

Suggest that those on the roster bring something they bake from memory. Alternatively they could bring a recipe with a memory... eg. perhaps something their Grandmother used to make.

History Book

This meeting would be a good opportunity to make the Corps History Book available for people to look through. Old photographs of corps events could also be displayed.

Songs (SASB)

Ch of song 724, Song 98 esp v2, Song 371, chorus 190

Competition

1. Memory Game – 12–15 objects placed on the table, covered with a cloth then ladies are asked to list what they remember.
2. Significant dates and events – See CD for handout. Link the event to the date and year.



Participation

Ask ladies to bring a treasured object and share the memory.

Humour

1. Ladies recall an embarrassing moment
2. Jokes about forgetful husbands and those “seniors” moments. See CD
3. Play a scene from Mother and Son – starring Garry MacDonald and Ruth Cracknell. This was a popular series on the ABC about an elderly mother with early dementia, who lived with one of her two sons, Arthur, a humble journalist.

Remembering Scripture

Invite ladies to recite a verse of scripture they remember.

Memory Verse

For fun, teach a memory verse in the old fashioned way. First the whole verse appears on the screen. Words are gradually eliminated until the group can repeat it without reading it.

Memorable Performances

Log on to You Tube to play the video of Susan Boyle singing “Memory” – on Britain’s Got Talent.

Sweet Memories

Wrap up some “old fashioned” lollies as gifts for the women. Use lollies that they might remember from their childhood.

Quotes about “Remembering/Memories”

See CD for handout and powerpoint slides.

Prayer time

Pray specifically for people caring for those suffering Dementia/Alzheimer’s. There might even be people in your own group who are carers.

Guest speaker (See CD for suggestions and websites)

Sing-along – old favourites

Scrapbook Ministries

If your corps has a scrapbook ministry, this would be a good opportunity to share with the ladies about the connections being made through this group. Perhaps you could take some photographs of some of the classes leading up to this meeting and prepare a powerpoint slide show. Alternatively... another good idea would be to inform the women about the Restoring Memories Project. Kristen Cairns from the Rockdale Corps instigated this ministry in response to the devastating bushfires at the beginning of the year. A report on this ministry is included in this manual. You could contact Kristen Cairns for more information.

Memory and Smells

See CD for quotes. The following website might provide some helpful information for an educational segment. www.tsbvi.edu/Outreach/seehear/summer05/smell.htm

Recorded songs (choose from...)

1. Those were the days my friend (singer Mary Hopkins)
2. The way we were (singer Barbra Streisand)
3. Heirlooms (singer Amy Grant)

Options 1 or 2 could viewed on You Tube.

Remember When

Check out this website and mention some of the memories listed. www.link4u.com/dare.htm

Lest We Forget

Reflect on the life of just one Australian woman who served in the war. The following website might be helpful. www.angellpro.com.au/lestweforget.htm

Devotions

See CD for 2 options

Other Resources and Ideas

Forget Not His Blessings by Daisy Hepburn. Applying Psalm 103, a song of thanksgiving, to everyday living.

The gift of hearing

We are grateful to **Captain Carole Smith** (Canberra City Oasis Corps) who has provided the following suggestions to assist with this topic.

God's Whisper in a Mother's Chaos – by Keri Wyatt Kent
http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?item_no=822704

Listening to the dark – Sermon by Eugene Lowry
<http://www.preachingtodaysermons.com/loweuglistod.html>

10 Guided Meditations for Hearing God's voice within you
<http://www.thevoiceforlove.com/guided-meditation.html>

Nooma: Noise 005
www.youtube.com/watch?v=VzpF2aCZN-8

Why is silence so hard to deal with? Why is it so much easier for us to live our lives with a lot of things going on all the time than to just be in silence? We're constantly surrounded by "voices" that are influencing us on how to think, feel, and behave. Movies, music, TV, internet, cell phones, and a never-ending barrage of advertising. There's always something going on, always noise in our lives, but maybe there's a connection between the amount of noise in our lives and our inability to hear God. If God sometimes feels distant to us, maybe it's not because he's not talking to us, but simply because we aren't really listening. Nooma is a revolutionary product that is changing the way people experience spirituality – a series of short films on DVD with a 32 page discussion guide. It's not a book or a cassette tape. And it's not a CD or a two-hour movie. It's a new format called NOOMA – short films, between 10 and 14 minutes long, about God and our lives. (Used with permission – taken from Family Christian Stores website)

Wordsearch Puzzle – Sound and Hearing
www.ntsience.co.uk/word-search/8I-SOUND-q.htm

Quotes about Listening and Silence
<http://www.quotegarden.com/listening.html>

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- Invite a speaker to talk about cochlear implants.
- See CD – Listen to the heart cries (UK resource)
- Testimony on DVD of Captain Cheryl Kistan (Auburn Corps). In this recording Cheryl shares her faith journey as a young mum learning that her baby son was profoundly deaf. She testifies of God's grace during this personal trial and His provision when Micah received the gift of hearing through cochlear implants. Contact THQ Women's Ministries for a copy of the DVD.
- Obtain a copy of "Overcoming bumps in the road of life" by Keith Hampton. (Caboolture Corps) This book will be available in 2010 and includes the faith journey of a deaf woman who received the gift of hearing through cochlear implants.
- Keith's wife Ruth, is involved with The Bible Society who use AUSLAN (Australian Sign Language) to communicate the scriptures on DVD to the deaf. A series of 4 DVDs is available. Ruth is a contact person and is also available as a speaker in her locality. (Brisbane) Email address – ruth.hampton@aue.salvationarmy.org



The gift of intimacy with God

A Reflection prepared by Commissioner Linda Bond

At 7:30 am on Thursday morning, our territory is at prayer. It's a covenant hundreds of us have made to spend that half hour focussed on the needs of the territory calling out to the God who hears and answers. It is in truth a half hour of power. It is one illustration of a territory marked by prayer. And it is right that we have corporate praying. But it can never replace personal praying.

This past February, I was asked to speak at the Women's Captivated weekend. I spoke on the subject Prayer – What's It All About? I have been asked to put some of those thoughts in writing.

Prayer is about intimacy.

Intimacy, according to the dictionary, is a profound closeness, warm friendship, privacy. It is the lifelong adventure of getting to know someone. It is not coming to God with a shopping list but coming to him in relationship. Oswald Chambers wrote "Our ordinary views of prayer are not found in the New Testament. We look upon prayer as a means for getting something for ourselves; the Bible's idea of prayer is that we may get to know God Himself".

What we need to know is that God desires intimacy with us. If you could condense the story of the Bible into one sentence, I think it would be "God's relentless pursuit of relationship". From beginning to end, God pursues us, seeks us out, desires to communicate. And prayer is at its best when we come to him, seeking this profound closeness. The Psalmist talked about thirsting after God, like a thirst-driven deer (Psalm 42:1) and Paul had surrendered all his bragging rights to Know Him.

Yes, it involves, adoration, praise and thanksgiving for the more you know him, the more you love him and tell him so. Yes, he is big and beyond our understanding but as the old song says, "He walks with me and He talks with me and He tells me I am his own". So it is not posture in prayer that determines effectiveness. You may choose to be on your face, in a chair, kneeling, standing or walking. It's how deeply you connect with him that defines real prayer.

Prayer must also include honesty.

Intimacy requires honesty. To be honest means that one is truthful and sincere. Can there be real praying where there is evasion or deception? We need to be honest about our sins. The Psalmist was. Is there a more sincere, repentant sinner than David as he mourns his sin in Psalm 51 and cries to God for cleansing? The apostle John comforts the sinner with assurance that true confession meets the forgiveness and cleansing from God (1 John 1:9)

Honesty means we find freedom in expressing our needs. "Do not be anxious about anything", Paul writes, "but in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." (Psalm 4:6)

We also need to be honest about our feelings. When Job spoke with God, there was no false self, or religious masquerade. Job and the Psalmist vented. Although they knew the majesty of God, they were also comfortable in the friendship with God, comfortable enough to share their anger, disappointment and frustration. Honesty is possible in the context of a relationship of love. And how can it be otherwise when we see God in the face of Jesus, the One who knows the worst and provides the best. It is the security of this love relationship that qualifies us to see **prayer as advocacy**. To advocate is to plead on one's behalf, intercede, "stand in the gap". King Solomon could teach us a lesson or two on coming to God on behalf of others. When the temple he built for the Lord was being dedicated, he pleaded with God for his nation, for his people, pleaded with him to hear from heaven and forgive, or teach or discipline, or uphold their cause (2 Chronicles 6:12-42). The first verse of the next chapter tells us when he finished his prayer the glory of the Lord filled the temple. God loves to hear us cry out for others.

The world needs our prayers. Australia needs advocacy in prayer. The Army needs its people pleading for revival. The prodigals and elder brothers need fervent pray-ers crying for restoration. God has a heart for the world. To be in an intimate relationship with him means we will catch the beat of his heart.

Prayer requires integrity.

Integrity is wholeness, no hypocrisy. It is practice that is consistent with profession. We can pray at its deepest level, expose the depths of our need, carry our people on our hearts, but without submission we are merely saying prayers, not praying. When the disciples watched and heard their Lord pray, they wanted him to teach them. At the commencement of the model prayer, "thy will be done" was integral to the whole framework. But for Jesus this was not just a pattern, it was a lifestyle. Gethsemane was the climax, "yet not my will but yours be done" (Luke 22:42).

Someone has said, "to pray is to die to our own ideas, our misgivings, our sloth, our selfish desires and to be born to God's ideas, to his will, to a love and faith that can spring from his heart alone."

Prayer is intimacy, calls for honesty, involves advocacy and requires integrity. Yes, we want a territory marked by prayer. I want my life marked by this kind of praying. Don't you?

Editor's Note: This article supports our Mission Priority Number One

"A Territory marked by holiness and prayer"

The gift of grace

A BIBLE STUDY
Colonel Jan Condon – THQ



Note: This is a basic outline for a study on the Gift of Grace. Take time to read the relevant Scripture / stories and there are some questions at the end you may wish to discuss in the group.

What is grace?

Prayer before meals?

Most Christians have a basic understanding of grace as the undeserved favour or mercy of God towards us.

We know we are saved by grace Eph. 2:8

But how does grace impact our daily life?

Grace is not a one time gift from God.

Because we struggle with sin every day we need God's grace every day of our lives.

And grace is not fully experienced until it is shared or shown to others.

The NT word grace comes from the Greek word CHARIS – 3 meanings

- could signify a thing that has brought pleasure to someone or something that won favour e.g. a delicious meal or movie
- could describe someone in a powerful position showing mercy or favour to someone of inferior rank
- could signify gratitude – to express thanks to someone was to show them grace.

Grace appears 150 times in the NT

Jesus was full of grace – John 1:14

The throne of grace is mentioned in Heb 4:16 as a place where we can approach the Lord in prayer.

Paul knew he was saved because of God's grace Eph. 2:8,9 – not by his good works

So what is grace?

- Grace is a gift that we don't deserve
- Grace is a costly gift – paid for with the blood of Jesus on the Cross
- Grace sees potential in people and does not condemn
- Grace sees a solution – not a problem
- Grace helps ease the tension in relationships
- Grace helps sort out problems and does not keep a record of wrongs
- Grace does not insist on being right but helps to make things right
- Grace always aims to listen and understand
- Grace builds up and does not tear down
- Grace thinks of others – not self
- Grace emphasises mercy – not justice

What is Grace?

1. Forgiveness when we mess up.

Illustrate from the story of

- Adam and Eve
- David

God showed the incredible gift of grace in showing forgiveness through the sacrificial death and love of His Son

1 John 1:9

2. A Gift given to unworthy people

When we sin we don't stop to consider the consequences of what we have done.

Sometimes we are very selfish, arrogant, proud and don't stop to think who might get hurt.

E.g. Prodigal Son

Came to his senses but felt unworthy

Father ready to love and forgive even though treated badly

We hurt God, cause Him to grieve – He listens to us and wraps His arms of grace and love around us – unworthy though we are.

Psalms: 78 : 38 (RSV)

We owe God a debt when we sin, but He cancels that debt and pays in full, with His grace. We did nothing to deserve it but He gives it.

3. A Gift that Values people.

Jesus met a Samaritan woman who had a sinful past – John 4

He looked past her performance and recognised her deep thirst and offered her living water.

Another occasion Jesus saw Zacchaeus – a small man sitting in a tree – He called him down – he was rather amazed that Jesus would do that – dishonest man, very unpopular. Jesus looked past his corrupt performance and showed love to Zacchaeus.

A woman caught in adultery – the law says she should be stoned – Pharisees ready to do that. Jesus saw past her sinfulness and offered forgiveness.

Jesus' way of dealing with unworthy people, was to offer the gift of grace.

God looks beyond our performance and sees a person to love not condemn.

Is Freedom

God's gift of grace frees us when we seek forgiveness for sin. As we unwrap His gift of grace we find forgiveness.

1 John 1:9

4. A gift in darkness.

Barbara Johnson said "developing my sense of humour and unwrapping grace daily helps me to hang in there, even when I don't get answers I want".

Life won't ever be perfect – we all experience difficulties and problems. Barbara Johnson lost one son in Vietnam – another to a drunk driver, her 3rd son became a homosexual. But she learned that grace is stronger than gravity and grace enabled her to hang in there in tough times.

Jesus himself went through tough times and understands. He offers His gift of grace to help us cope. Troubles are often the tools God uses to cultivate the fruit of His grace in our lives.

Illustration

1 Kings: 17 – A Widow and her son starving to death when Elijah turns up and asks for a meal. She responds to his request in faith and God honoured her faith in a tough time.

Discussion questions

1. What is it about God's grace toward you that you find most amazing?
2. Why do Christians struggle to forgive one another and give grace to each other?
3. Barbara Johnson said "developing my sense of humour and unwrapping grace daily helps me to hang in there, even when I don't get answers I want". Discuss this.
4. Every day we can unwrap God's grace – how might you be able to do that?

Unwrap the gift... But don't forget to say thankyou

Major Rowena Smith – THQ

Décor See CD for suggestion.

A good time to have this meeting would be at the end of the year, giving the group an opportunity to express thanks for a good year together sharing the theme "Unwrap The Gift".

The meeting takes the format of the popular party game "Pass The Parcel". Choose a gift for the final prize that everyone can share e.g. packet of lollies or laminated bookmarks for every person. (See CD for template).

Alternatively you might like to purchase a book/CD/DVD for the Corps library. The final label should read "A gift for everyone to share".

Wrap the gift in the usual manner for Pass the Parcel with several layers of paper, each with a different instruction. Each new instruction indicates the next aspect of the meeting. A list of ideas is suggested below. (See CD for template for instructions) You can decide which order to place them, however it would be good to have a devotional reading close to the end followed by a concluding song. You could include more than one devotional reading if you wish. Perhaps one could be in the middle of the meeting. The CD contains 4 devotional options to choose from. These could be printed off so each person has a copy to take home to reflect upon or to share with someone they will see during the week.

As each layer of paper is removed, the recipient responds with "I want to say thankyou to God for..." then the next instruction is read aloud to announce the next part of the meeting.

Suggested recorded music for passing the parcel:

Blessed be your name

Thankyou Lord – Don Moen

If you use the first suggestion, make special mention of the words "Every blessing you pour out I'll turn back to praise" since this reinforces the topic.

Possible ideas to include

- Poems
- Competition (instructions on CD)
- Bible Reading – Luke 17:11-19
- Devotional Reading/s (See CD for 5 options)
- Quotes about "thanks/being thankful" (See CD)
- Humour/Jokes (See CD)
- Personal testimony – (prepared in advance – suggest 5 to 7 minutes)
- Prayertime – (See CD – for 2 options)
- Audio visual - Play Thankyou Lord by Don Moen. Use either of the following links
www.youtube.com/watch?v=5plrykpwZQw
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cv2e-OTb4eQ

Songs

SASB 552 Thankyou Lord for all your goodness

SASB 12 Now thank we all our God

Give thanks with a grateful heart

The segments will vary in duration. You might not be able to include all the ideas suggested in a one hour meeting. As you prepare, try to estimate how long each segment might take and this will determine how many layers of wrapping you include. e.g. A joke would take no more than a minute to read... therefore you might consider including more individual jokes at different intervals... alternatively you could have one humour segment which includes all the jokes.

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for USA resource – Give thanks with a grateful heart. Prepared by Lt. Colonel Isa McDougald Women's Ministries Resource 2003 Volume 33 Used with permission



10 Reasons to believe God gives the perfect gift

1. God loves to give gifts.

Long before we took our first breath, our Creator showed Himself to be a great giver of everything a man or woman could ask for. Today, He still wants to give us the desires of our heart (Psalm 37:4). Yet His best offer is so priceless and so perfectly suited to our needs, many think it's too good to be true.

2. It's described in the Bible.

The Bible describes a wonderfully mysterious gift that goes far beyond anything we've ever received. But does God offer to give us the desires of our heart as a reward from good living? No. The Bible refers to this spiritual package as salvation and calls it "the gift of God" (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9).

3. It cannot be earned.

God's perfect gift of salvation comes not by merit but by mercy, not by trying but by trusting. "By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

4. God paid for it Himself.

God gave us the freedom to accept or reject Him; our first parents walked away from Him. God revealed a plan of rescue whereby an innocent victim would die on behalf of the guilty. He did what can only be explained by love – He sacrificed His Son to pay for our sin (John 1:29; Hebrews 10:5-10).

5. It comes with a proof of purchase.

The receipt we hold for His payment is the record of history. Jewish prophets predicted a Messiah who would deliver His people from sin (Isaiah 53; Daniel 9:26). The Gospels tell us that He healed the sick, raised the dead, and gave hope to the oppressed. Instead of riding to power on the shoulders of adoring crowds, He voluntarily died at the hands of Roman executioners. Three days later, He walked out of a guarded tomb (Luke 24:1-7). Eyewitnesses of the risen Christ died at the hands of enemies rather than deny they had seen Him alive.

6. It was wrapped with care.

The Lord visited a young woman named Mary and miraculously wrapped Himself in her womb. When all seemed lost, God wrapped His gift in the reports of witnesses who told of a resurrection from the dead. For a final touch, the Creator gave His gift a colourful bow of diversity—people from every nation whose hearts have been changed by His love (Revelation 5:9).

7. God offers it by grace.

The apostle Paul described the difference between Adam, who spread death to all his descendants, and Christ, who brought life to all who trust Him. "If by the one man's offence many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many" (Romans 5:15).

8. It can be received only through faith.

God comes only where He's invited. The One who wants us to share the happiness of His eternal family knocks gently at the door of our heart, waiting for us to welcome Him into our life (John 1:12)

9. It's available to anyone willing to receive it.

Most of Jesus' best friends were fishermen, not scholars. One was a tax collector. One had been possessed by demons. One sold her body for a living. What they had in common was their willingness to accept the gift of God.

10. It inspires gratitude.

Those who've been saved from a burning building know what it means to live with a deep sense of gratitude. Those who know they've been rescued by God's grace from the fires of judgement live out of their gratefulness to God (Ephesians 2:10).

Excerpts from 10 Reasons to believe God gives the perfect Gift
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Read it at www.gospelcom.net/rbc/rtb/10rsn

Abundant blessings from a generous God

A Bible Study of James 1:1-12
Prepared by Marie-Louise Craig - Shoalhaven

This contribution also includes opportunity for a personal testimony, singing and some humour or a game. The inspiration for the content came from James 1:5 "But if any of you is lacking wisdom, let him ask from the God who gives generously to all and does not reproach, and it will be given to him."

See CD for leader's instructions. The notes have also been presented in booklet format. Print a copy for each participant.

Décor suggestion

Colourful balloons suggesting a mood of celebration. Presents and large smiley faces.

James 1:1-3

James, a servant of God and Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, the ones in the dispersion, greetings.

Consider every cause of joy, my brothers, whenever you encounter trials of various kinds, knowing that your testing of the faith produces endurance.

The first verse is the typical way to begin a letter in the days of James. We finish our letters by signing off; the early Christians signed on, so the recipients knew straight away who was writing. James describes himself as a servant of 'God and Lord' and then names God and Lord 'Jesus Christ'. This is important for us because we too believe that Jesus is God and our Lord.

After signing in, James greets those to whom he writes – 'the twelve tribes, the ones in the dispersion.' Well, there were twelve tribes in Israel, and some members of these twelve tribes were dispersed (that is, spread) across the known world. However, it is more likely that James is talking to others who believe that Jesus is God and Lord, so he is talking to the new Israel – the Christians – who were also spread across the known world.

We are Christians and we are spread across the whole world, so James is talking to us. Isn't that great? You have just received a letter that is around 2000 years old. Never complain about Australia Post again.

James instructs us to 'consider every cause of joy.' Now if you read this in your own Bible you will find something like this: 'Consider it all joy...' I don't know about you but I find it very difficult to believe that James would tell us to consider IT, whatever IT is, ALL JOY when we are encountering trials.

However, it is helpful to know that in the original letter by James, the word 'it' does not exist and the word 'joy' can mean 'cause of joy'. Now if we leave out 'it' and change 'joy' to 'cause of joy', we get 'consider every cause

of joy'. Now that makes sense to me. I frequently count my blessing when things are difficult and find reasons to rejoice to help me get through.

You will notice that James describes the trial we encounter as "various". That means anything that bothers me in any way comes under that description. It might be difficult relationships, or temptations, or grief, or a difficult decision, or ... well you know what is bothering you so you add to the list.

Exercise

Take a minute to write a list of the trials you are currently encountering.

James tells us that considering every cause of joy will lead to us testing the faith. Once again you will find a slight difference in your English Bible; your Bible is likely to have 'the testing of your faith', but the original letter most definitely has 'your testing' and 'the faith'. There is a huge difference.

Trials certainly test my faith. When I am tested, I frequently question whether God really loves me, whether I am really forgiven, whether God is even wanting to hear my prayers, let alone answer them. Trials are one of the reasons why Christians give up, and yet James says something about endurance.

If we read this verse as if was originally, your testing of the faith, then things are very different. When I am tested I look at the body of teaching that the Bible has given me that is the faith and I test it. Here's an example, I am having a particularly unsatisfying week and I say to God, 'You promised me life in all its fullness. What is this?' God never fails to answer that prayer. So I have tested what I have been told is true of God and it is true of God. Now that is sure to produce endurance. Here is another. I am tempted and I feel as if there is no way out and I am about to give in, when I remember another part of the faith – 1 Corinthians 10:13 – 'with the testing God will also provide a way out'. So I pray, 'Hey God, where's the exit you promised?' And there it is, just waiting for me to look for it. That looks like endurance to me and a cause for joy. The promises of God are sure! My testing of the faith proves it.

James goes on to speak of other causes for joy, most of which have to do with the faith that we have been taught. So, then, consider every cause of joy so that whenever you encounter trials of various kinds, you can test the faith, prove it is true and so win through.

Exercise

Pair up with another person.

Pick one of your trials each and together try to find what the Bible says about it.

How does this make a difference?

James 1:4

And let endurance have full effect, so that you might be mature and full of health, lacking nothing.

The cycle is this: we encounter trials of various kinds; we consider every cause of joy and we challenge the faith; God provides and we endure; then this endurance produces things in our character.

Obviously James is used to people stopping before the work is finished. Just enduring or persevering is not sufficient. We need to keep persevering until the full effect is complete. Or maybe, people learn the lesson and then forget it so that when the next trial comes they have to learn it again. This means that the capacity to endure learned in their last trial, cannot be built on.

This is where "considering every cause of joy" becomes important. As we dwell on the way the faith has answered our challenges in past trials, we, by rehearsing that history, retain the lesson. Then the lesson becomes part of our personally tested faith and we are ready to learn more. As a result we grow in maturity and spiritual health, and, James adds, we will lack in nothing. This too is both a cause of joy and a part of the faith which we can test for genuineness the next time we encounter trials.

So, my friends, let's learn the lesson and remember it the first time round by rehearsing what we have learned. This can be done easily by keeping a journal and then reading back over it. Or we can tell others one on one, in our small groups, or in a public worship service. We can tell our families. However you do it, 'let endurance have full effect, so that you might be mature and full of health, lacking in nothing.' Then when you encounter another trial you will have more resources to help you endure and when you have endured you will have even more resources for the next trial.

So here is another cause for joy! Growing resources.

James 1:5

But if any of you is lacking wisdom, let him ask from the God who gives generously to all and does not reproach, and it will be given to him.

In verses 2 to 4 James has just told us that when we allow perseverance to have its full effect then one of the results is that we lack nothing. However, in order to be able to complete that cycle we need to be able to see God in it, and we need to make right decisions that will result in perseverance.

What we lack now is the wisdom to see God in it all, so

James tells us to ask God for wisdom.

To help us to do that he gives us some information about God. God is a giving God. "No one attribute expresses all that is true about God, but each expresses something about him that is true all the time." (Moyter, p. 38) So God isn't just a giving God, he is always a giving God.

Even more important is the fact that he gives always to all who ask and he gives generously. This word is complicated in the Greek but is a good word to apply to God.

To make it easier for those of us who don't study the Greek, this word tells us that there is a simplicity about God's giving. His giving not complicated – we ask for wisdom and he gives wisdom. It is also sincere. There are no ulterior motives – he wants the best for us. As a result his giving is "liberally bountiful" (Bagster). There are no conditions applied and so there is no limit to God's giving.

We apply conditions often in our giving and often use our giving to control the behaviour of others. Reproach is often present – "I gave ... to you and this is how you treat me in return?" James says that God does not reproach, even though God has more reason to than we do.

We nearly always rush into life without asking for his wisdom. We make a mess of things. We realize our lack. We come to God and ask. God gives without reproach. He doesn't say, "You should have come sooner. Now I have a mess to clean up."

So there is no barrier to overcome when we come to ask for wisdom. We don't need to convince God to give. We don't need to worry whether we are the kind of people he will give to. We don't have to fear that it will be hard to get any or enough, and we do not need to hide our real selves because he will not criticize us.

So here is another cause of joy we should consider well.

Exercise

In small groups of 3 or 4, go through the passage above and list all the characteristics of God's giving.

How can knowing this about God change how we pray?

James 1:6-8

And let him ask with faith, not doubting at all; for he who doubts is like a wave of (the) sea that are driven by the wind and tossed about. For do not let that person, a person who is double-minded, unstable in all his ways, suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord.

If our prayers for wisdom are not answered the problem is not with God but with us.

James has just told us that God is the giving God, who

gives to all without reproach and that if we need wisdom we only have to ask and he will give it to us. This is part of the faith – the body of truth about God that we have been given and that is always true no matter what the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

The point is do I believe it? If I do, God will give, but if I doubt then I will be like a wave that is never in one place for very long and which really doesn't have any stability or control.

What kind of doubts are involved here? Firstly, doubting the Faith, that is, doubting that God gives, gives to all and gives without reproach. When we doubt any of this we will not be able to ask whole heartedly.

Secondly, if we have doubts about our need for God's wisdom, we are not going to ask seriously for it. While we are still partly convinced that we can find our own way without his help, we are not going to ask whole heartedly. The human wisdom we will find instead will leave us like that wave.

Thirdly, we need to be convinced that we want to act on the wisdom God gives. When the wisdom comes to us, if we are not happy to act on it, it will feel as if we have not received it. Wisdom is only useful to us if we apply it.

God does not place this as a condition of his giving – that we not doubt – but rather our doubt produces an environment in which we ourselves cannot receive what God is so willing to give.

In the last section we talked about the quality of God's giving as being simple and sincere, "liberally bountiful." The word has the idea of being single-minded. This simple single-minded and so generous action is contrasted with our being two souled or two natured or double minded. I think of other English words and phrases that fit – "sitting on the fence," "a foot in both camps," "divided loyalties" – and then I think about the single minded trust and devotion of some of the heroes of the faith who were stable and strong and through whom God worked miracles.

The problem is never with God; the problem is with us.

To truly be God's person, I need to be one souled. I need to be "liberally bountiful" towards God – devoted, passionate, simple, single-minded. I need to know God gives generously to all without reproach. I need to know my need of that giving and I need to be willing to accept the gift, whatever it is, for any given time in my life.

Humour / Game

James 1:12

Blessed is anyone who endures temptation. Such a

one has stood the test and will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

This verse acts to bring us back to the original theme by repeating 3 words that were used in the first two verses of the body of the letter: endures; trials (temptations) and test. In that first discussion, encountering the trials led to the development of endurance, this in turn led to maturity, health and completeness (lacking nothing). These qualities are all important to our earthly life.

Now, after an excursion into the problems of earthly life (verses 9-11), James returns to the original idea of enduring trials. This time enduring trials leads to an eternal result.

James begins this new section with the word "blessed." This word is the same as the word Jesus used in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:3-11). There and here, there is the sense that this blessedness is something conferred on the person who adopts a particular attitude or action. In verse 2, on the one hand, we are told to do something in response to trials, here, on the other hand, something is done to us. In verse 2 and 3 we are told to consider every source of joy as a way to test the faith so we can endure. Now James moves past that and says that if we endure we will be blessed.

It is interesting to note that in the Beatitudes, Jesus lists the blessed in verses 3-11 and then in verse 12, he commands his hearers "to rejoice and be glad" in the face of insults, persecution and all kinds of evil.

James continues to follow the pattern of the beatitudes which is "Blessed is/are ... because/for ..." The clause after "because/for" outlines how the person who has the correct attitude or action will be blessed. The appropriate action for blessing is to endure trials according to James.

Before we look at the blessing that follows, we need to note that James adds something before the blessing - "becoming approved" or "stood the test." Our endurance of trials through recognizing (considering every cause of joy) and testing the faith, results in our being approved for blessing. It shows that we are not of divided loyalty or unstable) (v. 8).

So James is saying that this blessing can only come once we have shown that we believe.

Now for the blessing: "he will receive the crown of life, which he promised to the ones who love him."

The only other place in the Bible where the phrase, "the crown of life," is used is Revelation 2:10, "and the setting is the same as in James. Those who are prepared to use this life as an arena of endurance for Jesus' sake will find that an abundant life awaits them from the hand of God." (Moyter p. 49)

However, God did not promise "the crown of life" to those who endured. He promised it to those who love him. Our endurance cannot, therefore, be motivated by the desire to gain "the crown of life" – that is a selfish goal – but by love for God. Love for God leads to trusting God, which leads to causes for joy, which leads to endurance, which leads to maturity, which leads to lacking nothing or abundant life. The bottom line is loving God.

If we are not blessed it is not God's fault, it is ours, because we do not endure, because we do not trust, because we do not love God. We are instead "two souled" or of divided loyalties and therefore unstable. Such people are unable to take hold of what God has promised.

How many of you are thinking, "Well, that's me. I have doubts. I don't always love God. I don't always trust him." Don't despair! This is another trial to add to the list. This is another place to test the faith. This is another place to practice endurance. This is another place to ask our generous God to bless us with the ability to see things his way. This is another source of joy because it is another way we can grow to maturity and full health, lacking nothing.

Exercise

Go back over James 1:1-8 and list all the causes for joy that you can find.

Write each one on a "brick" and glue them on the praise wall.

Song

Just let me say how much I love you.

References

Moyter, A. (1985). *The Message of James*. Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press.

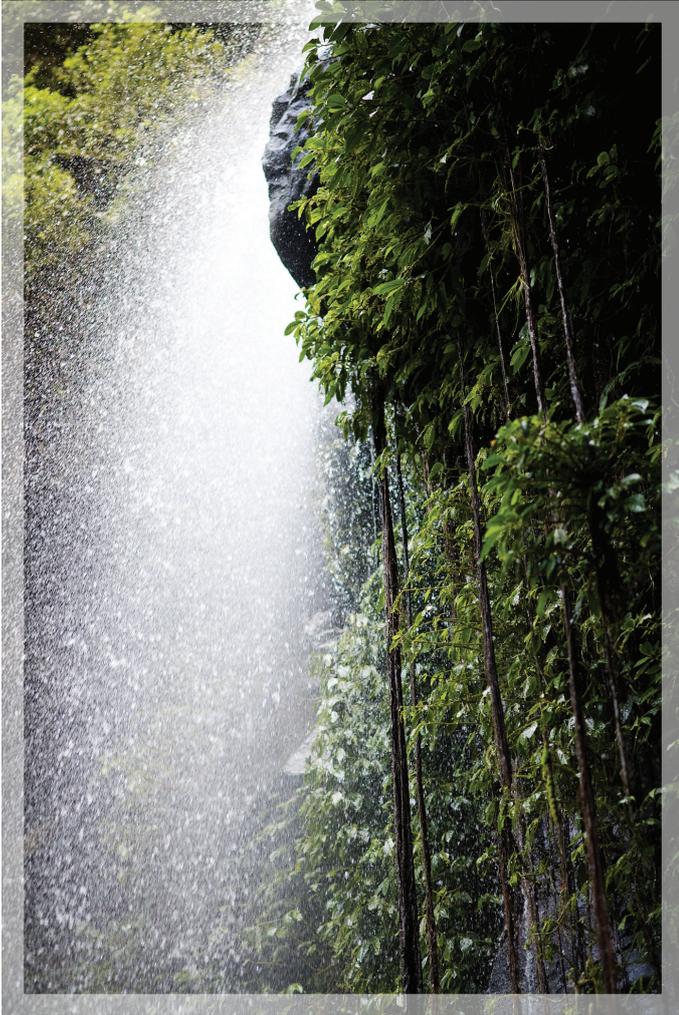
Bagster, S. (n.d.). *The analytical Greek lexicon: Consisting of an alphabetical arrangement of every occurring inflexion of every word contained in the Greek New Testament scriptures, with a grammatical analysis of each word, lexicographical illustrations of the meanings, a complete series of paradigms, with grammatical remarks and explanations*. London: Samuel Bagster and Sons

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings

Our land abounds in nature's gifts of beauty rich and rare

Cheryl Grigg - Carina Corps



Genesis 1:31

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning – the sixth day.

Décor

Ask the ladies to bring beautiful picture frames/wall hangings/texts of scenery with or without Bible verses depicting God's creation.

Welcome and Introduction

There are few places in the world that have the range of nature from the familiar to the rare as the world's largest island continent, Australia.

All the country's natural wonders have helped shaped Australia into what it is today. Australians feel that its natural gifts are there to be enjoyed – whether it is snorkelling on the Great Barrier Reef, taking a cultural guided walk around the great monolith that is Uluru with the land's custodians, bushwalking, trekking or camping with family and friends on the beautiful Fraser Island.

Today we want to consider God's beautiful creation in this land of Australia.

Suggested Songs

The Great South-Land (Words and Music by Geoff Bullock)

All things bright and beautiful	SASB 25
For the beauty of the earth	HLSB 21
Morning has broken	HLSB 69
O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder	HLSB 80
This is my Father's World	HLSB 117

Suggested DVD Resources

There are many music DVD resources with beautiful hymns and scenery which would enhance worship readily available at Christian bookstores.

- i.e. iWorship@Home series
- To God be the glory
 - Abide with me
 - Precious moments

Sharing Time

Women love to share about their favourite places they have travelled to and the awesome scenery witnessed. Encourage them to talk about how they felt looking at God's creation.

Natural Wonders unique to Australia.

Refer to information on the following website for some introductory comments.

<http://www.australiatravelwiki.com/page/Intriguing+Natural+Wonders>

Poem

"My Country" by Dorothea Mackellar (1885-1968) (See CD)

Competition

In which states and territories of Australia do you find these 16 Natural Wonders of Australia? (See CD for quiz—print copy for each person to answer individually or ask the whole group the questions)

Devotions

One of the primary foundations of our faith is a belief in our God who created all that we see and who created us in His image. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth....And God created man in His own image ... (Genesis 1:1, 27a)"

Let's consider 12 characteristics of God through scripture which demonstrate His qualities as our Creator God. (All scripture referred to is the New International Version.)

(See CD for handout—print copy for each person)

God our creator is –

- Empowering – Psalm 124:8
- Eternal – Psalm 90:2
- Glorious – Psalm 19:1
- Invisible – Romans 1:20
- Mighty – Psalm 33:6
- Powerful – Hebrews 11:3
- Praiseworthy – Psalm 103:22
- Satisfying – 1 Corinthians 8:6
- Self-Revealing – 2 Corinthians 4:6

- Strong – Jeremiah 32:17
- Well Pleased – Psalm 104:31, 33
- Worthy – Revelation 4:11

God has revealed Himself through His creation so that we can understand more about His divine nature. When you look at the detail and the variety which is seen in God's creation it is difficult to believe that this happened all by itself. This world and all that exists in it is the deliberate and intentional creation of God's handiwork, and we are able to learn more about Him as we look at what He has created.

Closing Prayer

Father God, thank you for what you have revealed to us in your creation. Thank you for your incredible handiwork. Help us to understand you more and make yourself known to us through your creation. Thank you in Jesus name, Amen.

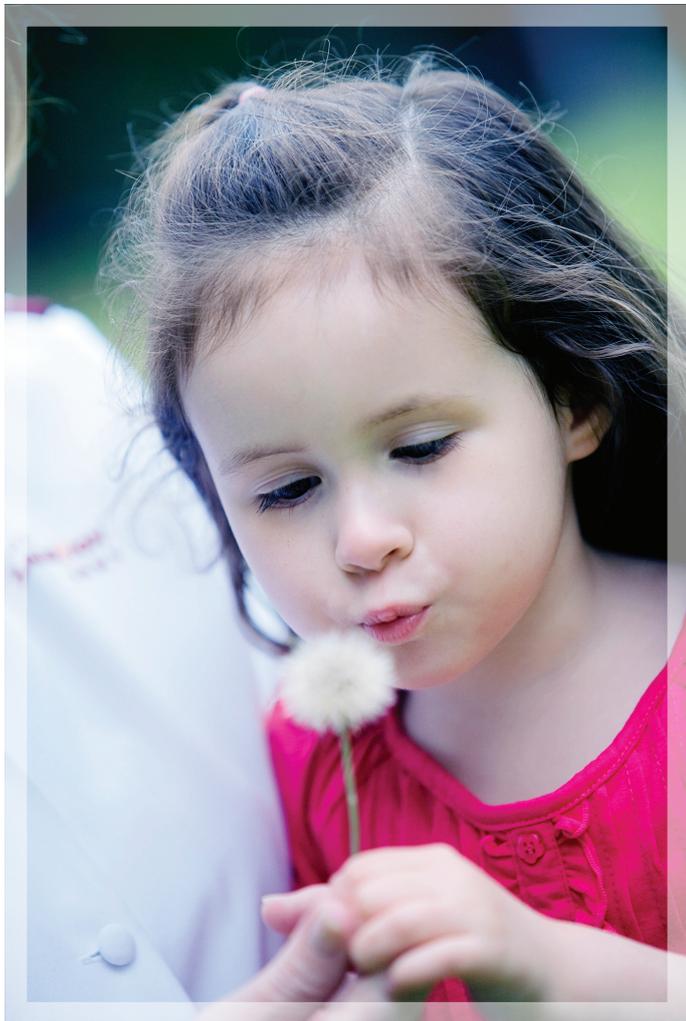
Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- See CD for Poem by Bruce D. Prewer – His Work Around Us
- Play a brief segment from an Australian nature documentary.
- Sing the Australian National Anthem.



Gifts from childhood

Gillian Sweeting – Northside



Décor

A table with gift boxes of different sizes wrapped decoratively. Sit teddy bears on some boxes also small dolls, toy cars or any small toys. Pictures of children of different ages, could be hung around the wall. On some boxes glue words like: faith, trust, joy, love, hope, happiness, laughter, obedience, listening, speaking the truth.

Songs

The wonder of His grace No. 52 'Keep Singing'

The wise may bring their learning No. 849 SASB – Use tune 264 SATB Stand up for Jesus.

Bible Reading

Mark 9:36-37 Jesus taught his disciples to welcome children. This was a new approach in a society where children were usually treated as second class citizens.

Mark 18:1-5 Jesus used a child to help his self-centred disciples get his point. We are not to be childish but rather childlike, with humble and sincere hearts.

Matthew 19:13-15 Here the disciples must have forgotten what Jesus had said about children. Jesus welcomed the children because they had the kind of attitude needed to approach God. They had a trust and simple faith in God that adults need. Sometimes our intellectual achievements and stubbornness stand in the way of simple faith needed to believe in Jesus. So we see God's beautiful gift of love to children through Jesus' actions and words.

Gifts from childhood can be taken two ways.

1. We can remember the gifts we received when we were children.
2. We can think of the gifts that children give to us during their childhood.

Let us look at some biblical gifts from children given to others.

(Use the boxes "faith" and "trust")

Remember Naaman? He was the important man. Head of the army and a good friend of the king. He bought a little girl as a maid for his wife. Naaman was very sick – he had leprosy – sores all over his body. The little girl who was treated well felt sorry for Naaman and wanted to help him. She told her mistress about the prophet Elisha in Israel who was one of her people who served God. He could make Naaman well. Naaman journeyed to see the Prophet who told him to bathe seven times in the river Jordan. Naaman needed to learn humility.

After his anger subsided at such a command, Naaman was healed after the seventh dip. He now knew that God healed him and God was the true God. What a beautiful gift his little maid led Naaman to receive. Her faith and trust in God was simple and yet so firm that it changed Naaman's life.

(use box with "obedience")

What a life changing gift from God when he used Moses. You will know the story.

Moses was chosen by God to deliver His people, the Israelites out of their bondage in Egypt to God's promised land. Moses' life was planned by God and as a baby he was saved from being killed as the Pharaoh had declared all boys under two to be killed. He grew up in Pharaoh's palace and as his life changed he fled to Midian and lived there for forty years herding sheep and goats. God spoke to him to go back to Egypt and bring his people out. Moses was God's gift to Israel right from his childhood.

(Use box with "listening")

A woman named Hannah longed to have a baby. She had a good husband who loved her, but she was sad about not having a baby. She went to the holy place at Shiloh where Eli was the priest. She prayed to God for a son and told God she would give him back to the Lord to serve in the temple. God answered her prayer and her boy was named Samuel. From his young life came a beautiful gift of dedication and service to God. Being trained to serve God through his childhood, doing what God told him to do, Samuel grew up to be a great and holy prophet and led his nation because he had the gift of listening to God.

(Use box "speaking the truth")

When Jesus was twelve years old he was taken to the temple at Jerusalem. Even though he was very young Jesus was full of wisdom and holy power. The teachers of the law were amazed at how much he knew. Jesus himself was very interested in his Father's law and was happy to talk to the Rabbis about it. Asking deep questions and listening to the wise old men. Mary and Joseph started on their way home thinking Jesus was with them. When they found he wasn't they hurried back to Jerusalem to find him. They found Jesus still in the temple. Jesus asked them "didn't you know that I would be in my Father's house doing my Father's work?"

During his childhood he reminded his parents that he was really God's son.

Suggestions for participation:

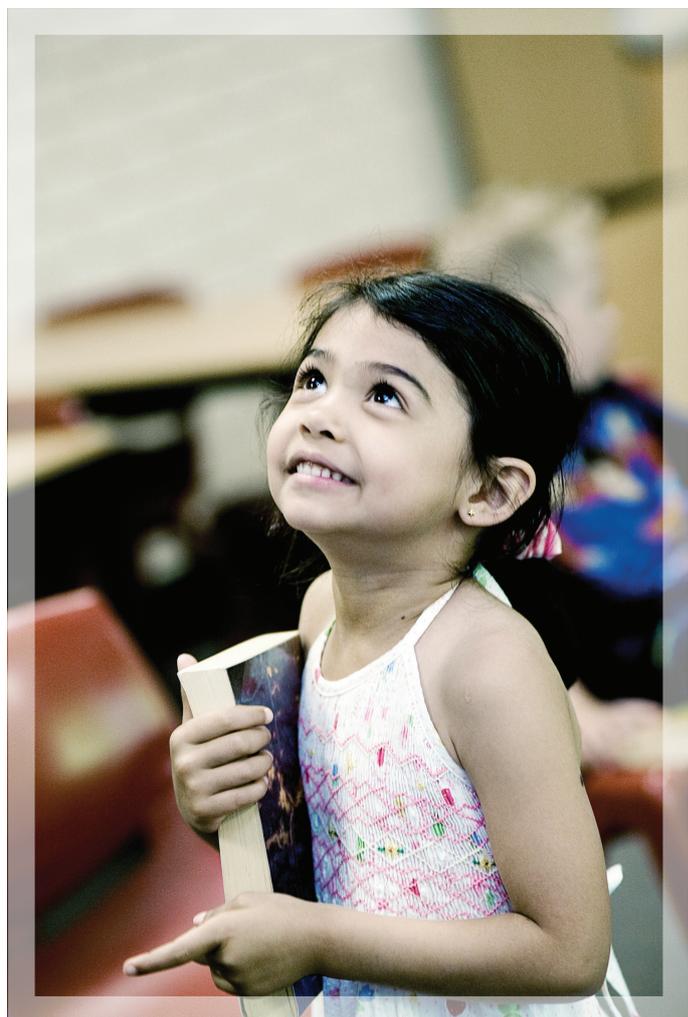
Women could be asked to bring a special gift they received during their childhood and share with others. And/or talk about a gift that made a difference to them in their childhood. E.g. Godly parents, Christian teachers, kind friends or neighbours.

Humour

(Use box "laughter") See CD

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- See CD for Warcry article "Children at Heart"



Bags, boxes and bows

Prepared by Major Sue Cox – Campbelltown



A practical workshop style meeting.

Suitable for Home League, Evening Fellowship or Craft Group

Purpose of Meeting

This is actually a great activity for any gathering, timed around the end of the year when everyone is thinking about Christmas wrapping.

The main part of the workshop features a session on how to make homemade wrapping paper and a demonstration of how to create a fluffy bow.

See CD for instructions and materials needed. These can be printed as handouts for the participants in the workshop. (Photography by Sue Cox – permission given to copy)

The handouts also include Other Simple Gift Wrapping Ideas.

Idea for Devotions

Play the song or segment from “The Sound of Music” where Julie Andrews sings the song “Favourite Things”.

Develop the theme of being “tied up with string (ribbon!!)” by using the verses from Ecclesiastes 4: 9-12 that ends with... “A chord of three strands is not quickly broken”.

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- See CD for craft idea for decorating a gift bag
- See CD for USA resource – Tie it with a bow – prepared by Dawn Hayman
Women’s Ministries Resource 2009/2010 Vol 40
Used with permission
- Invite a guest to demonstrate creative ways to wrap gifts
- Include a game: teams of 3 have to wrap a gift with one hand behind their back.

Discover your gifts – lifekeys

Major Shelley Soper – Earlwood

“LIFEKEYS” is a journey! A Journey of discovering who you are, why you are here and what you do best!

Transform the lives of the women around you and the ministry of your Church!

This journey of discovery changed my life and the lives of many women that I know (and some men as well). It is personally empowering and also empowering to the Church as people discover ‘themselves’ and release ‘who they are’ fully to God. I highly recommend this tool which can be used in small groups or individually. It can also be undertaken through the School for Leadership Training at Stanmore.

A very usable work book is provided and keeps a clear record of the process as it unfolds. The manual is more comprehensive without being complicated and is reasonably economical to purchase. For those who desire to lead a group there are even more helps available and details can be found online.

“Life Keys” is beautifully biblically based and could be used very well in a Bible study type group. However it also comes with easy to use tools as part of the process of ‘discovery’ helping to give greater understanding of ourselves (and others).

The participant is helped to identify those natural gifts with which we are all born. Quite often if we are not nurtured or encouraged in those areas of natural gifts we can find ourselves ‘plodding’ through life perhaps applying skills but not experiencing the joy of using our gifts and doing “what comes naturally”. Spiritual Gifts are also approached in a

fresh way clarifying the supernatural work of God in our lives which often empowers many of the things that come naturally to us, for the building up of the Church. Spiritual gifts are clarified under the following headings Gifts of the Heart, Gifts of Proclamation, Gifts of Action and Gifts of Inspiration and an easy process is outlined to find those gifts.

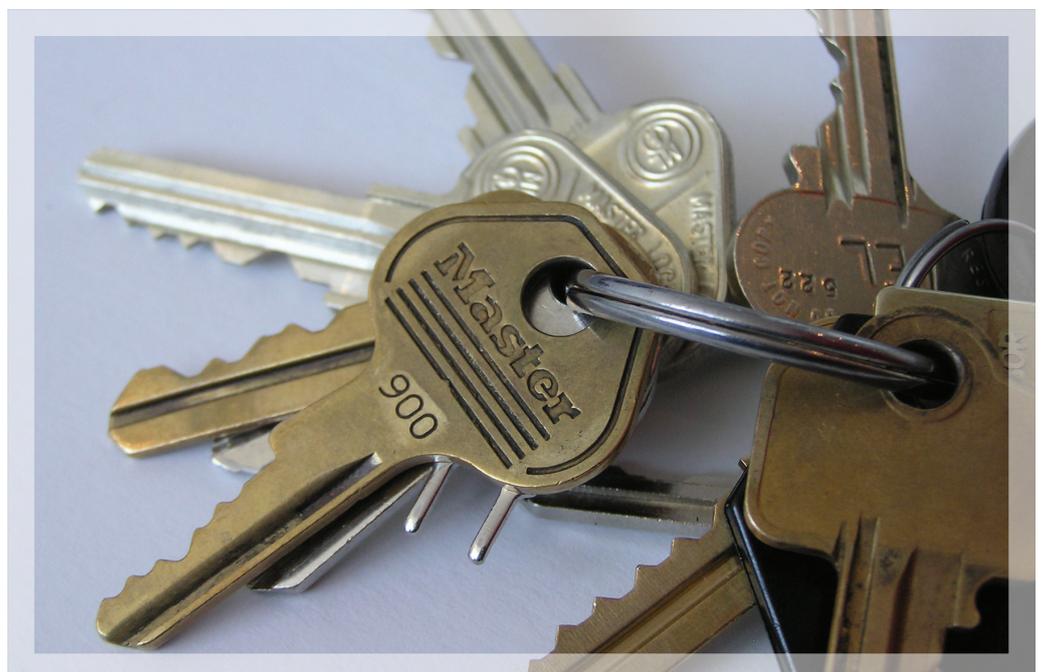
God gave us natural gifts for our pleasure and to help us better position ourselves in life. Spiritual Gifts are “God’s hands on earth”.

When we join that knowledge with understanding our personality type, the area in which we will use those gifts is more easily identified. (An example is how extroverts and introverts will function quite differently using their same gifts and talents in a variety of different ways.) This also helps us to understand and get on better with others in the family and in the Church.

Knowing our core values helps to clarify our choices and to understand which activities or settings are right for us. The process of “LifeKeys” also assists us to identify what we are passionate about and where we will serve.

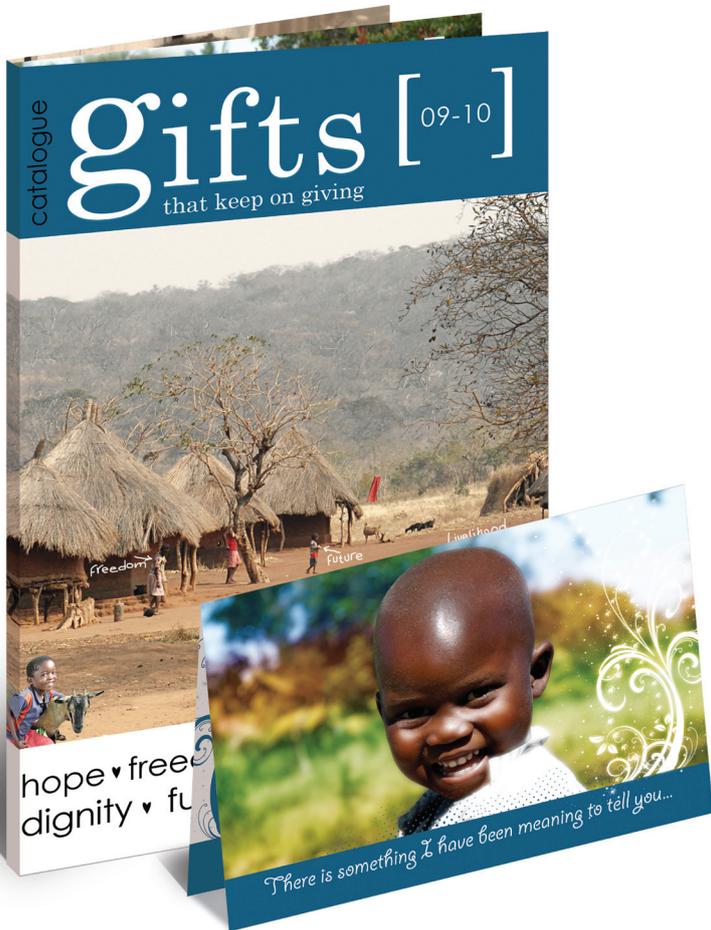
Discovering also helps us to set priorities and find fulfilment in service. An excellent tool that ‘embraces’ all facets of an individual’s life giving self understanding and a greater understanding of others. There is a well laid out work book and a manual which are fairly economical.

THE LIFEKEYS DISCOVERY JOURNEY is Clear! Simple! And very enjoyable! One that thousands of people highly recommend.



Gifts that keep giving

Lt-Colonel Pam Hodge – THQ



Preparation:

Decorate the hall with gift boxes and bags.

Contact the International Development office for copies of the Gift Catalogue and Child Sponsorship brochures.

Songs

This is my Father's World – SASB 42

The Gift goes on

Obtain a copy of the words and music of Sandi Patti's song "The Gift Goes On". (Christmas album) The song can be read as a poem or sung.

Participation:

Ask ladies to share on the topic "My best Gift ever."

Have you ever given or received a present you know is not what you really wanted or needed? Why not buy or ask for a gift that keeps on giving and makes a real difference in people's lives. The Salvation Army has a Gift Catalogue with a range of gifts that will create livelihoods, better living conditions, education and work opportunities for our neighbours in some of the neediest parts of the world.

Below are some of the ways **Gifts that keep giving** can be given and the impact they have made on the lives of real people.

Provide a number of Gift Catalogues (available from International development Office) to give the ladies so that they can see what is available and understand how it works. A powerpoint presentation is available from THQ.

Stories of Gifts the Keep Giving

Self Help Groups - In India, Self Help groups have been set up as a means of developing women both socially and economically. These training programs are aimed at disadvantaged rural women and address social issues such as child labour, sex trafficking, child abuse domestic violence and income generating projects. By supporting a Self Help group to begin we give a gift that keeps giving.

Real Life: "At the age of 82 I learned in my Self Help group that there are only seven days in a week. When I borrowed money from my landlord he took daily interest from me each week. He told me there are eight days in a week, so he charged me eight day's interest. Our group members are helping me to learn many things. Now I save money, no more borrowing and I am happy."

Child Sponsorship By sponsoring a child or supporting an institution with \$25.00 a month you are giving children in developing countries a hope and a future a gift that keeps giving.

Real Life: Peninah Nduke was 3 years old when her mother decided that enough was enough and took Peninah and her little brother out to the dump outside the town where they lived in Kenya.

When the mother had arrived back home without the little girl the family went looking and found Peninah. The mother was put in a hospital and the little ones were taken to a Salvation Army home where Peninah grew up and because of the international support through sponsorship she has been able to grow up into a fine young lady who has been educated and now is an accountant working for The Salvation Army in Kenya.

Peninah had been sponsored right through her education by the one sponsor who has dedicated her life to make sure that Peninah has a hope and a future.

Livestock – By buying a goat or chicken or pig or rabbit you are helping a family to raise their income and giving opportunity for a better life. Livestock are also given to children and teenagers who are ‘heads of households’ looking after brothers and sisters in places where their parents have died from AIDS.

Real Life: It was very encouraging to visit the goat program in Wawu Village, Meigu County, China. The project started with giving 40 households in the village a goat. The goats produce about 4 kids per year and can be sold for 24 RMB per kg. A goat can weigh about 50kg. Since 2000 the goat pass on scheme has now impacted 170 families raising annual household income by A\$800 to A\$1000 per annum. Now that’s a gift that keeps giving.

Devotions

In Luke 10: 25 – 37 we read the story of the Good Samaritan where we are told to

“Love your neighbour as you love yourself”

The story of the Good Samaritan shows us

Who is our neighbour?

the least likely

- those who don’t think like we do
- those who don’t keep the rules

How should we treat them?

With love and care using the resources that we have. The Good Samaritan used:

- his donkey
- his time
- his money

What should we do?

- Discover God’s World – read/take note of what is happening
- Dream of how it could be
- Do what God directs

Closing Prayer

Conclude with the Poem One Little Candle by Joseph Malloy Roach, Published 1952

www.kokomo.ca/early_years/one_little_candle_lyrics.htm

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for additional devotional readings
- Suggest to the group that this could be a group project to consider for Christmas time.



Relational Evangelism

Lt-Colonel Miriam Gluyas – THQ

Building relationships with people who are “not yet Christians” is key. We need to be careful that all of our relationships are not with Christians, if we want to see people come into the Kingdom.

The diagram on the next page really tells the journey of 5 real people and I could show you many more that would demonstrate the same thing.

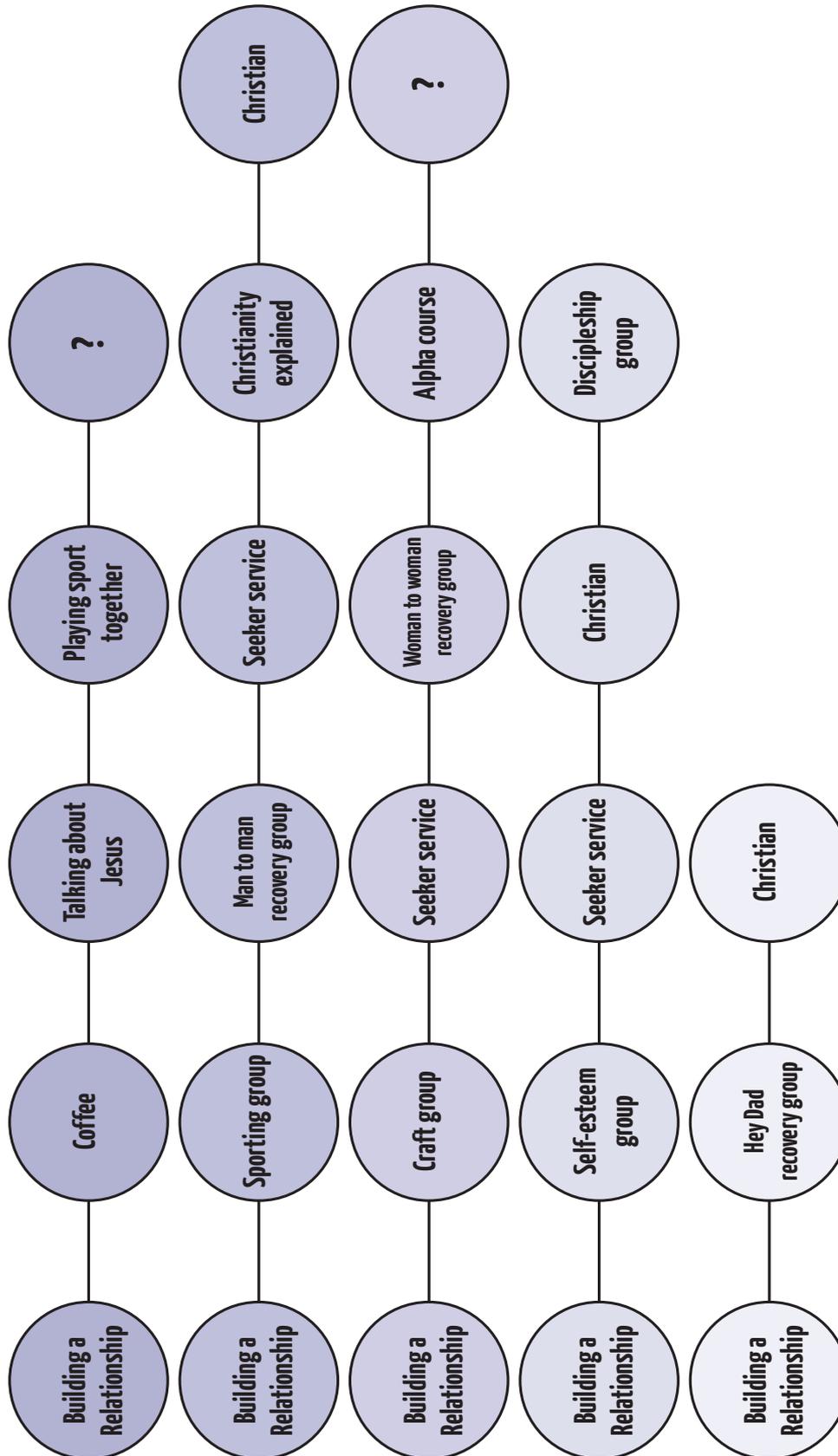
There are some key things here:

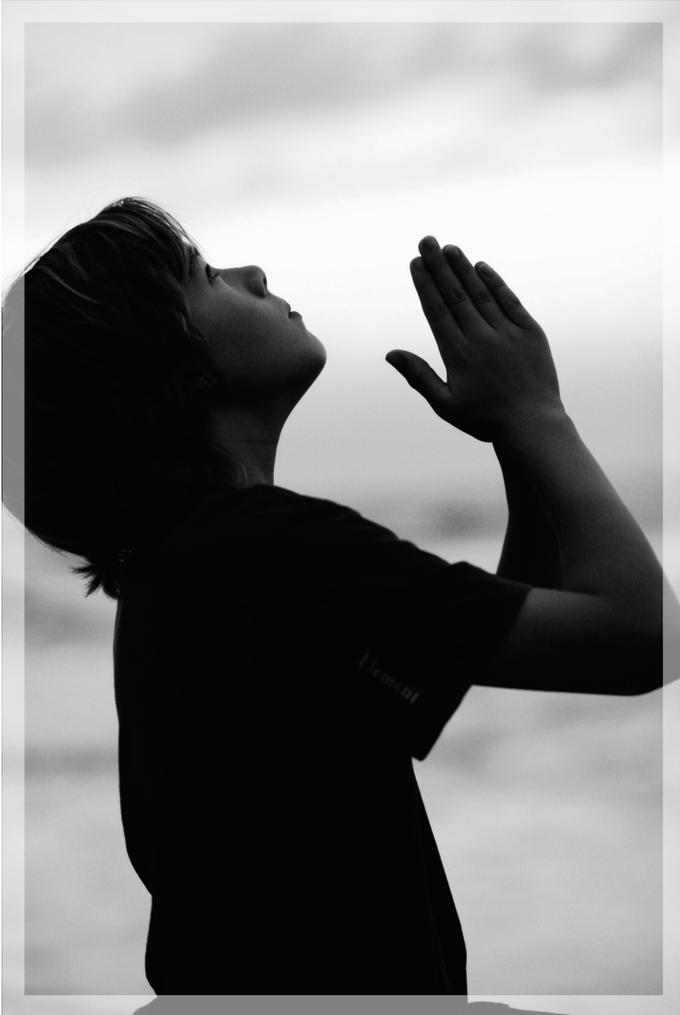
1. They all begin with a Christian building a relationship with someone who's not yet a Christian.
2. They get the person involved in a group. The key to these groups is that there is a leader, a pastor and an evangelist in each group (and the leader is not always the most important person). In the groups, the new person needs to build relationships with other group members as well.
3. Most people need more than one group along the way, to connect in to.
4. It's not “one size” fits all.
5. Jesus needs to be brought into the conversation along the way and the person needs the opportunity to have a relationship with Him.
6. Even if the person doesn't become a Christian, you stick with them.
7. You may need to be prepared to stick with people over the long haul. In our current culture it can take between 5-8 years for someone to make that decision.
8. Pray and get others praying.
9. You can't just have one group and expect people to come and stay. Think through what their needs are.
10. Once someone comes to Christ, make sure they are well disciplined.

Miriam Gluyas



What will the track be for different people?





Prayer Walk Experience 1

Prepared by Lt. Colonel Marilyn Hamilton (with slight modification)

Our Church – a gift to our community

Preparation: Reproduce the booklet for each participant. (See CD for template) Insert a photo of your corps building on the front. Insert a map of the suggested route on the back.

Have you ever considered our church as a gift to our community? In 2009, St. Hilda's Anglican Church in Katoomba sought to convey this message by actually gift wrapping their entire church tower.

As you participate in this prayer walk around our community, take time to reflect on this thought. Our church is a gift to our community. We truly want people to receive what we want to give them.

Choose route 1 or 2 and as you walk, pray in line with the following suggestions.

Pray for the people you see, that they would want to know the deeper truths of life.

Pray for those you meet as you walk – pray they may have peace in their lives, reconciliation for broken relationships. Pray that God would impart a desire for these people to search after him, that God might bring genuine Christians into their lives who will reflect Christ to them.

Pray for any children you see, for their protection, that God would reveal himself to them through committed Christian teachers in school or through other healthy relationships.

Pray for their parents, for godly wisdom and energy to parent them well.

Pray for any teenagers you see – that God might place deep within their heart the desire to know their Creator, to discover their purpose, that the Church would be true to its mission to reflect Christ in ways that will make sense to this generation.

Pray for guidance as to how the Corps can reach out to these people.

Pray for the shop keepers.

Pray for those who walk this way every day, that as they do, they might notice God's creation and be caused to think about the Creator, that God might stir deep within them the desire to know him, that he would connect them with one or two of his own people.

Pray for those who come here for welfare relief, for those who serve them, that they might know your wisdom and patience and perseverance.

Pray for those who find a home in this place, but who do not find this (yet) in the church.

Pray that God might open doors for these who seek belonging here, to find it in greater measure in the community of faith.

As you approach the (name) Corps:

Pray for those in leadership here, who have influence. That God might energise them, help them to lead well, fairly, justly, to see the needs of those around them and be able to put things and people into the best places so that these needs are met.

Pray that God would encourage them.

Pray that God's Spirit would rest on them in power and an anointing for ministry.

Other Resources and Ideas

- See CD for story and photos of St. Hilda's gift wrapped church.
- Perhaps you could further develop the idea of our church being a gift to the community.



Prayer Walk Experience 2

Prepared by Major Rowena Smith

This walk would be suitable in a retreat setting (perhaps in the bush or near the ocean)

Preparation

Each participant requires a Bible and pen and receives a brochure (see CD for template) and a parcel containing five objects. These objects will help the participants to reflect on specific gifts from God. Place all the objects in a plastic zip-locked sandwich bag. Wrap the bag in bright tissue paper and tie with ribbon. Objects include an encouragement card with envelope, small scroll with text (See CD for template), a blue glass stone, a small soap and a rock.

Instructions

Gather participants together. Distribute the brochure and parcels. Explain that the gifts are not opened until a specific time during the walk. Tell participants to find a quiet place to commence reading the booklet which will tell them when to unwrap the gift.

Unwrapping God's Gifts

Throughout the year we experience different occasions where gifts are given and received. Christmas is a time when people are often more generous than usual. People have a strong yearning to give to the less fortunate. During this next hour, we will have the opportunity to focus on the generosity of our God. His strong yearning to give to his children is not seasonal...it continues without ceasing.

Let us consider some of the many gifts He pours out upon us. We are abundantly blessed. He provides for us in so many ways. As you spend this time in meditation and reflection... allow God to draw you closer to him. Consider also what your response will be to this generous God we worship. Reflect on v3 of Song 12 SASB.

As you look around at your surroundings, marvel at the work of God's hand. This is God's gift to us. Psalm 115:16 Enjoy it. Soak it up. Breathe deeply. Concentrate on the Creator.

Spend some moments in adoration... Praise him for the glory of his creation. Reflect on v1 of Song 28 SASB.

But this is just the beginning... Our Heavenly Father gives us so much more.

The small gift you have been given today, contains some simple reminders of just a few gifts our loving Lord gives to us. Take a moment now to consider these as you unwrap the gift. What is your response to each of these gifts?

One of the most precious gifts God gives to us is the gift of special friends. Reflect on v4 of Song 28 SASB.

Just for a few moments, thank God for the special friends in your life. Pray for a friend who is struggling with some concerns at this time. If you choose...take this time to write a note of thanks or encouragement to the special friends God has given you.

The small scroll represents The Word of God. God has given us His Word and in so doing He has given us His wisdom, His comfort, and His counsel.

The Psalmist expressed his gratitude for this precious gift. (Psalm 119:89-93) Reflect on v 3 of Song 856 SASB. Consider the scripture verse inside the scroll (Jeremiah 17:7). As you meditate, let God speak to you through this verse.

Sometimes our spirits can feel a little parched. There are times when we feel so spiritually dry. The blue glass stone represents a droplet of water. God gives to us his refreshment. (Revelations 21:6)

Reflect on v1 of song 351 SASB. Is your spirit dry? Ask God to give you His refreshment. Intercede for someone else who needs God's refreshment.

Still thinking about water... Let's now consider God's wonderful gift of cleansing from sin represented by the small soap. (Hebrews 10:22 and Ezekiel 6:25) Reflect on v1 of Song 415 SASB. Use these next moments as a time of confession. (Psalm 51:7)

To this point we have considered just a few of the gifts our loving Lord has provided for us. His creation, friends, His Word, His refreshment, His cleansing.

In Matthew 11:28 the Lord shares yet another gift... His rest. Read Matthew 11:28-30. What does God ask from us? What does he want us to give to him?

Ponder on these verses... Psalm 55:22... 1 Peter 5:7. Reflect on v1 of Song 246 SASB. Are you burdened with concerns and worries at the moment?

Use this opportunity to share your feelings with God...ask him to give you the courage to give your burdens to him. The stone enclosed can represent the burdens you might be carrying just now. Get rid of it... Throw it into the sea... Throw it into the bush.

Thank God that He gives you His peace in replace for your burdens. Read John 14:27. Reflect on v1 Song 579 SASB.

As you leave this place of meditation... leave with a sense of PEACE.

Thank God for His boundless provision and trust him to sustain you.

Other Resources and Ideas

A variation of this prayer walk is a Treasure Hunt. See CD for Treasure Hunt Prayer Walk prepared by Annette Donovan for the WOW* Retreat held by The Greater West Division in 2009. This resource could be adapted to suit your specific setting.

(*Women Only Weekend)

Purely movies and supper

Report by Major Sandra Godkin – Menai



This group came from the question- what is the next step? We wanted to connect some of the women who attend our focus groups more into the church and so came this idea of Purely for Women. This happens on a Friday evening once a month where we have opportunity to reach these women without the distraction of children. We felt we may be able to build more meaningful relationships without the children around.

We started in February 2009. We didn't want the night to be too draining. We decided that we needed something every month to keep the continuity of seeing these ladies, without burning ourselves out.

SO came the idea of PURELY MOVIES AND SUPPER. PMS as it has become affectionately called. 3-4 times a year we plan to have a larger event. All under the Purely For Women umbrella.

Movies so far have included Juno, Chocolat and Mama Mia. These nights consist of an intro, maybe a getting to know you game. We watch half the movie, we always have a thought and then we have supper and watch the final part of the movie. We feel strongly that we need to always share a thought with these ladies. We want to be up front about who we are and what we believe.

These nights have been so successful – we have had women from all our focus groups attending – Coffee Spot, Mini Music, Playgroup. Our church ladies know that they are there to build relationships. Again we need to be intentional. The first two nights we had about 50-55 ladies attend. The Mamma Mia night we had 67. At these nights probably one third were unchurched ladies.

In May we had our first big night. We had a fashion night, Absolutely Fashion. Our guests were ladies from a company called Absolutely Fabulous. We also had some makeovers with a hairdresser, makeup artist and then we dressed the models in clothes from Salvo stores. We also had a virtual makeover on the computers and lots of, "Aren't you glad you came gifts". We had 78 ladies and probably half of them were unchurched. To me, the success of this night has been to see our church ladies inviting neighbours and ladies from the other focus groups ... sitting with them and chatting with them. During our Absolutely Fashion night, a lady who had previously attended the 'Introducing God' course, was able to share her experience.

**(movies selected for these events are chosen from the CCLI list – though a fee of around \$100 was charged to screen Chocolat which was not included on the CCLI list)*

The Menai corps are delighted to have a graphic artist in the fellowship who is able to produce quality invitations which have certainly had a positive impact on the promotion of this activity. See sample on CD.

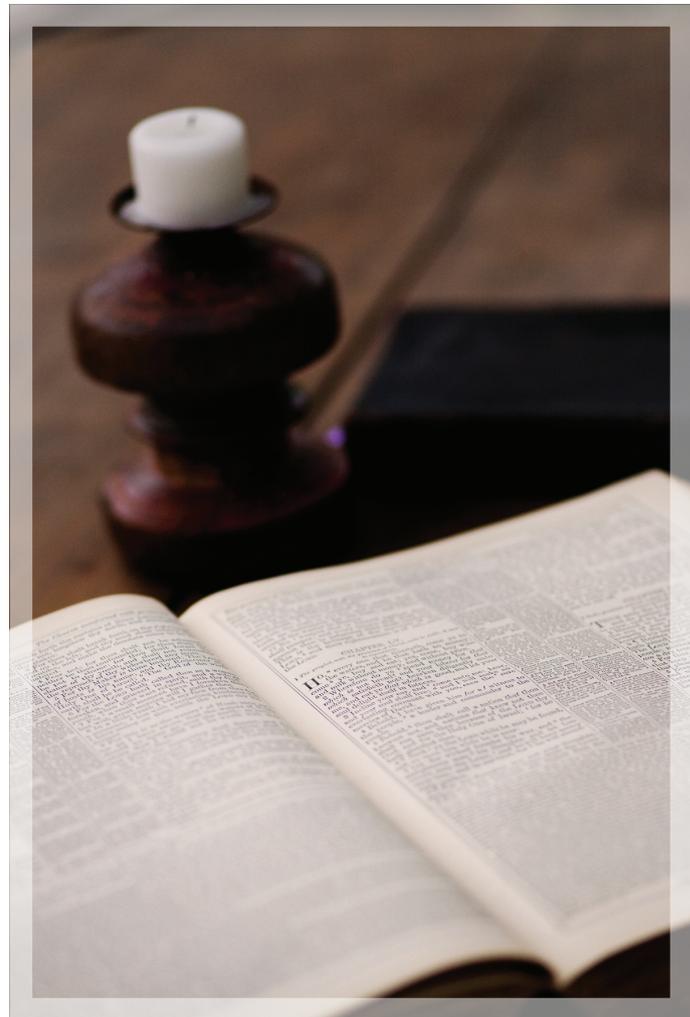
Purity seminar

Report by Nicola Poore – Parramatta

How does a young woman guard her mind, heart and body in a sex-saturated world? The inaugural Purity seminar was designed to address questions such as these. Purity was each Friday night in June (2008) at the Parramatta Corps to equip young women with Biblical principles and practical strategies of relevance. The primary objective of this seminar was to create a forum in which the pressures and temptations of young adulthood could be discussed in terms of Biblical truths. A group of thirty young women associated with the Parramatta Corps met together to discuss these and other such issues over the course of four sessions.

The catalyst for Purity was a book entitled, *Every Young Woman's Battle*. Participants were given a copy of the book and this helped to inform discussion. Each Friday evening session was characterised by a presentation from a number of specialist Christian speakers including Captain Janice Rees (Miranda Corps), Pam Neale-Justins (Salvo Counselling Service), Alison Hick (Wollongong Corps) and Captain Emma Johnson (Batemans Bay Corps). Following the presentation, the seminar participants split into small groups for further discussion with women leaders from the Corps. Each evening concluded with beautifully arranged suppers that facilitated further fellowship. Purity was a unique opportunity to build meaningful relationships between generations of women while addressing sensitive issues in a respectful and godly manner.

Seminar organisers were Nicola Poore and Lauren Menzies.



Creative crafts

Report by Kristen Cairns – Rockdale

Our group originally started as a Creative Memories group in 2000 to learn the (then) new art of scrapbooking, through Creative Memories. There were a number of women in the corps interested in Creative Memories at the time and so they formed a group, under the guidance of a local Creative Memories Consultant, and invited other ladies from the corps and friends from the community to join them.

Because of the nature of the craft involved and its relevance to so many different types of people (even those who would class themselves as 'uncreative') there was a lot of interest in this group.

The group decided to meet monthly, on a Friday evening and, in later years, to also hold two 'All Day Scrapping' days as fundraisers each year. We have used these days to support various projects, including The Australian Cancer Council Girls Day In, overseas projects and (in 2009) the Restoring Memories program.

As the group has evolved over the last 9 years, the focus has shifted from a 'Creative Memories style' to a more 'generic' style of scrapbooking and so our group name was changed in 2006 to Creative Crafts and now includes scrapbooking as well as card-making, knitting, needlework, beading and quilting. We advertise on our website, in the local scrapbooking store (with whom we have developed a close relationship) and in the local Gloria Jean's coffee shop.

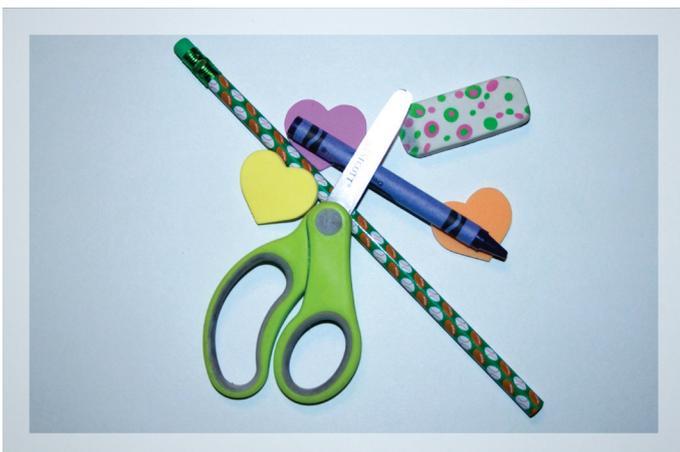
The main purpose of the group is to provide a non-threatening and relaxed setting where (particularly non-church) women can be invited to come together with ladies from church to allow for connections and relationships to grow. The main purpose is not the craft (although that is the activity we are engaged in), rather the purpose of the group is to provide a casual and welcoming setting for connections and relationships to occur between ourselves and women from our community - the craft is the very enjoyable tool we use to do that.

There are really not many resources needed for a group like this - a room with good lighting, tea, coffee and supper, tables and chairs. Our group has a 'Scrap Stash' box where people can put supplies they no longer need. This box is then open for anyone to take from for their projects. This has worked well for newcomers who may not have a lot of supplies. The other item we produce at the beginning of each year is a laminated bookmark, with all of the dates for the rest of the year on it, along with the contact number and information for the group. These are available for ladies to take and give to their friends as well as on the information table in church.

One member of our group has also recently started a card making session during the evening, aimed at the mothers who bring their daughters to Sunbeams (which is on at the same time). This has been quite successful, with those mothers even bringing along friends of their own to the group. This has provided us with a wonderful opportunity to connect with women from our community, many of whom have recently immigrated to Australia and don't yet have an established support network or group of friends.

While our evening doesn't include a formal devotions or prayer time, we are very aware of the importance of connecting and building relationships with the women who attend. Already we have had women (and their families) join our Sunday church as a result of their initial connection with Creative Crafts and other connection groups like Mini Muso's and our Women's Multisport competition.

We praise God for this amazing opportunity to connect with women from our community and enjoy a great evening of scrapbooking and craft – all in the name of ministry.



Shawl ministry

Report prepared by Janice Saunders – Gold Coast Temple

After visiting her daughter in America and attending her daughters church where the Prayer Shawl Ministry was in action, Janice Saunders got a glimpse of how this too could be an effective ministry in her corps at the Gold Coast.

If you are interested in looking into this ministry for your own corps, Janice is happy for you to contact her to ask any further questions. She has provided this summary of the ministry.

1. On our return to Australia, I hesitated about suggesting this idea, thinking of the hot weather in Queensland etc. But when asked to lead Home League on the topic of My American Visit , I also included the idea of the prayer shawl ministry. By this time, I had already knitted one and crocheted two, so we had a fashion parade and I spoke about this ministry. The ladies loved the idea and really embraced it and many started immediately. Then I attended our Craft ministry and presented the idea to them. They were the same.

The ministry is based on the book The Prayer Shawl Ministry which is produced by the Lion Brand Yarns.

They have suggested prayers for commencement of this ministry. A couple of these prayers are read out to the group. Copies of these prayers are printed for the participants. Patterns for both knitting and crocheting are also provided. The participants also receive copies of prayers to be said as they are working on their shawls.

I contacted www.shawlministry.com and advised them that we had commenced a ministry here and they were only too happy to share any information from their website. It is worth looking into. The only requirement they make is that you include the above website name which covers any copyright.

The basic pattern for a shawl is 3 plain and 3 purl and then you purl the plains and plain the purls! Trebles for crocheting. So as suggested on the website the knitters say, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, or Love, Joy, Peace, or whatever as you are working in threes! This is what makes it a prayer shawl as the worker is working her love into the shawl.

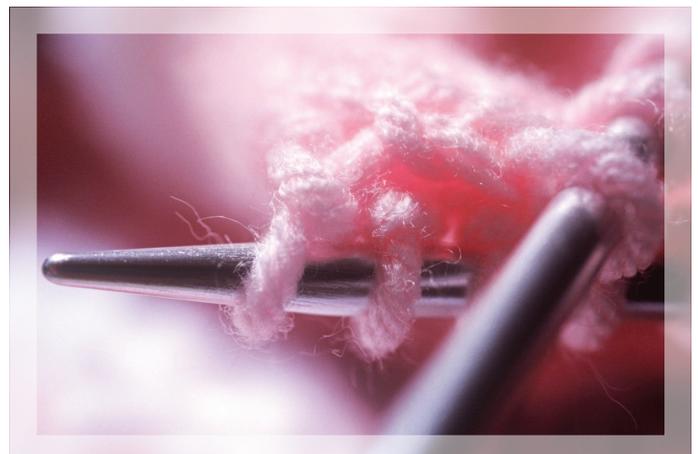
2. There is no real need to advertise as mostly it is heard about by word of mouth from people who enjoy knitting and crocheting and also the response of the recipients.
3. The responses from the women who have received these shawls have been tremendous. Ladies have said how they have felt truly blessed and loved by God. Some examples are of how the prayer shawl made a difference in a Hospital ward. Others tell of hiding in their prayer shawl. One lady said that it "saved

her life" after a death in the family. Several of the recipients have not been believers but have always responded positively to this act of love.

Ladies have used them as stoles and even worn them to Home League or the Army and when presented by either myself or one of the pastor/carers we say this is a 'warm hug from God'. Also I have a tag or bookmark which we present with each gift, and I suggest that the giver read that to the receiver. Some are calling them Love Shawls or Friendship Shawls.

4. Mostly the ladies who create the shawls work independently. Knitting or crocheting at home, in the bus, even at Home League meetings etc. However, occasionally the Craft Group will have as one of their weekly sessions an afternoon entirely for Prayer Shawls. (On the website www.shawlministry.com they suggest that a shawl can be done with each member doing a certain number of rows - but we have not done this)
5. Resources include the obvious - wool, needles, crochet hooks and patterns. Each worker is given a brochure at the commencement of their involvement.

We have found that interested women who cannot knit often make donations of wool etc. The Corps have offered to help with purchases (within reason) if necessary. However, we have not had to go there yet!
6. As mentioned this has been a tremendous ministry and can be expanded to Graduation Shawls for graduates from Fairhaven and Stillwaters. New baby shawls, leaving home shawls, new ministry shawls etc etc. (On the website there is even a pattern for a dog shawl! and a dishcloth!)



Restoring memories

Report by Kristen Cairns – Rockdale
Restoring Memories, Project Coordinator

(note: this report was submitted in June 09, several months before the project was completed)

How the idea came

Restoring Memories is a project being run throughout 2009, inspired by a desire to support the victims of the devastating January/February Victorian bushfires. The simple aim of the project is to reach out in love to people who are hurting so desperately and who have lost so much that is precious to them - to provide them with a gift that will hopefully help them on their way to restoration not only of their homes but of their memories as well.

Many families have experienced the utter devastation of losing their homes and their communities and they have lost (in some cases) almost or every tangible memory item they own, including photo albums, videos and films and other precious mementos of their lives, families and life events.

Restoring Memories aims to create and provide these families with a handmade scrapbooked photo album, complete and ready to have photos added to it by them once they are able to get copies from their own family and friends. There are no photos involved on our end (we use blank white photo-sized rectangles instead). It is our desire to provide something that is 'almost finished' but which they can complete themselves, by selecting and adding their own photos, page titles and journaling to the pages, as part of the healing and restoring process.

The project will be running throughout 2009, with layouts being finalised by early December. The layouts will then be sorted and compiled into sets of 20 for each album. It is anticipated that the albums will be given to the families as a Christmas gift, with each family being able to look at the albums and select one which is appropriate for them.

How the idea was developed and communicated to others

Knowing how many scrapbooking and craft groups we have throughout our territory and following brief conversations with a few different people, it was evident that there was a lot of potential interest in a project like this. To ensure the greatest dispersion of information, an information pack was sent out from the Territorial Women's Ministries Department, through the Divisions, to corps and other interested groups with the community about the project. A page on the AUE website was also set up to hopefully gain some extra 'community exposure' www.salvos.org.au/RestoringMemories



The Australian Southern Territory are also supporting the project, through the Melbourne Central Division and their work at the Bushfire Relief Site at Whittlesea. A person from the community has been identified as a 'local' contact who knows families in the area. Other suitable people to be involved at the dispersion stage will be identified through DHQ in Melbourne.

Resources required

To help maintain consistency and streamline a project of this size, a "Guidelines & Ideas" document was distributed which contained examples and ideas of what type of layouts to create, helpful hints on making the pages 'user friendly' for the recipients as well as instructions on what to do with the completed layouts.

We have also approached some scrapbooking companies and shops for support, through the donation of empty albums to use once the layouts have been completed.

Because of the nature of the project, groups and individuals who are participating in the project will probably have all the 'supplies' they need to create the album page layouts. All layouts are donated by the groups and individuals participating, so there is really no 'cost' (other than time) involved in running the project or for participants, other than the materials they are using to create the pages.

The response from women

The response has been great, with many individuals and scrapbooking groups participating. Some groups are working together to complete one or more albums on a theme, while other individuals have completed a number of separate layouts.

The project (currently) still has a number of months to go, but already we have begun to receive layouts and donations of albums.

One corps scrapbooking group in Sydney, have already held an all-day scrapbooking event and used the cover charge for the day as fundraising to purchase albums to donate to us. 20 empty albums (and over 30 layouts) were donated through them from that day. They have another day planned for later in the year.

Other groups have scrapbooking weekends away or all day events planned for later in the year, during which participants will be invited to support the Restoring Memories project.

Many participants have expressed their pleasure at being able to 'use up' lots of scrapbooking supplies they had left over from other projects or had collected but never used

yet (any scrapbooker out there will totally understand this line of thought!!). Other women have been pleased at the opportunity to create album pages on themes different to what they would normally create (e.g. baby boy or girl, wedding, family holiday, pets etc) or for the opportunity to try out some new techniques or styles.

Other aspects might of interest.

There is also a project currently being run out of Whilltesea Bushfire Relief Site to collect photos for families who have lost all of theirs, through family, friends and community members. These photos are being scanned, logged and compiled for registered families by a community group in Whittlesea. There may be opportunity for further involvement by Restoring Memories in the future, in scrapbooking some of the photos for families identified as having a special need or suitable for an 'extra-mile' gift of love.

Expressions of interest from scrapbookers who would like to be involved in this are most welcome, which can be done through the Territorial WM Department.



A “rhythm for life” - music program for preschoolers and parents

Report by Captain Leanne Spence – Rockdale



Advertising

Our advertising has been through word of mouth. The mums go to other groups like playgroups and story time at the library and let other mum's know about our program. A letter drop was done during the Red Shield Appeal weekend in 2008 but there hasn't seemed to be any response come from it. It is all about relationships, coming with friends and meeting new people.

The response from the women

For a lot of the women it is the favourite day of the week. The women seem to be really comfortable and we get a lot of positive feedback. Quite often the women will bring the children's grandparents to see and experience the program.

The program

The program we use is “Rhythm for Life, a program that has been put together by Renata Davies. After attending the Children Matter conference in Brisbane in August 2008 Renata felt led to create a preschool music program with a Christian basis. Renata has a background in this work and she has created a program adapted from the program Hey-Dee-ho. The program is a half hour music program adding in some Christian/Sunday School songs and also a short Bible story.

Since Renata works for Hey-Dee-ho she was able to implement the Rhythm For Life program at no cost on a trial basis at the Rockdale Corps. Normally the program costs around \$600.

A little bit about Rhythm for Life!

The aim of the Rhythm for Life program is to provide a Christian, community-based program to bring families together through music. Activities are designed to stimulate childhood development within a regular family-orientated social occasion.

The Rhythm for Life program offers:

- A proven and thoroughly researched Australian music program established for over 21 years;
- A full program including:
- class plans for 50 weeks of the year;
- presenters notes;
- music tracks;
- access to puppets, props and other resources;
- training DVDs of songs for presenters;
- internet access to training resources;
- a help line;
- information for parents;

Ministry opportunities

The ministry opportunities seem to be growing each week. We have a great team that have extended the relationships beyond just the Thursday morning but meet with and make personal contact with other mums and kids throughout the week. We also have a mum who is playing Women's Multi-sport on a Wednesday morning in our sports centre.

Involvement from corps folk in leadership

We have had three women from the corps who have had the main role of leadership with Mini Muso's (previous name) helping with morning tea, administration and the leadership of the music program. This year we have had another couple of young mums who belong to the corps helping as well. As our numbers are increasing each week there is so much potential to invite more people from the corps to get involved.

Any other aspects that are of interest

One of the most exciting events that has happened, apart from our numbers increasing each week, is that last November (2008) a family came to our Kids Celebration Sunday and has kept coming since – only missing a few Sundays over the Christmas holiday period. This family is becoming more and more involved in the corps and really connecting with the corps family. The wife especially has joined a Home Church group and the husband is helping in our Sports Centre one night a week.

With our numbers increasing we are looking at ways to improve how we run Thursday mornings so that we continue to stay effective in reaching families from our community.

We are excited to see what God is going to continue doing through Rhythm For Life here at Rockdale Corps and we are grateful for what He has already done.

For more information contact
Renata Davies on 1300 139 631
Or renata.davies@heydeeho.com



Mainly music

Report by Major Helen Ellicot – Coolum Mission



Connecting families into the corps through the ministry of preschool music programs can be a challenge. Major Helen Ellicot reports on an idea being used at Coolum Mission which is having an impact. (taken from the Women's Ministries Newsletter May 09 – South Queensland Division)

'Hey Hey it's Sunday' is a family friendly church for the unchurched that has recently commenced on the last Sunday in the month to reach out to the Mainly Music families.

Each 'Hey Hey' has a theme; the last one was "The Giants in our Life" where the story of David and Goliath was used. The afternoon includes involvement from the children as well as the adults.

The worship band consists of Mainly Music dads as well as some Corps people incorporating worship songs as well as songs from the Mainly Music repertoire, where everyone does the actions. The message is kept simple, being very interactive which helps children, parents and Corps folk to be involved. The challenge is given of how God can be trusted to help in everyday life.

At the conclusion of the service a sausage sizzle barbecue and some great fellowship is enjoyed. This is proving an effective way in reaching out to the Mainly Music families and introducing them to the Gospel.

To advertise we put a notice in the local free paper the week before and give out an invitation to all parents in the week leading up to the Sunday, if any families are away we do a mail out to them. At our last Hey Hey a family from the community – who have never been to Mainly Music – read about Hey Hey in the paper and came along and last Sunday that same family came to church. Also at our last Hey Hey some of our Home League ladies, who don't come to church came along, got involved and had a great time.

New Resource

Launched at Captivated in Brisbane - Feb. 2010

Overcoming
BUMPS
on the Road of Life

**Down to earth personal accounts
of women facing life's challenges.**

Keith Hampton

