

# TouchPoint

The North American Baptist Conference Women's Connection Newsletter

WINTER 2025



## Reflection and Anticipation

Embracing the transition from one year to the next fills me with a sense of joy and

anticipation. I have had the precious opportunity to reflect on the year that has passed, with all of its adventures, problems, trials and blessings and now to take the time to look ahead with excitement to what God has in store for my life and the opportunities He will

give me to lead and follow in ministry.

As we turn the page as a team, we are grateful for the connections we made in 2024 through our TouchPoint newsletter, our luncheons, time spent connecting at Triennial and for the encounters we had as we went to retreats, regional meetings, and as we visited our NAB churches.

In 2025, we look forward to having a presence in Alberta, British Columbia, NorCal, the Eastern Association with our luncheons and with our You Glow Girl initiative that brings middle and

high school girls and their leaders together encouraging them to lean into their identity and purpose. We look forward to developing cohorts of women in leadership focusing on their growth as a leader, developing confidence in their ability to lead, and providing a safe space for voicing concerns and ideas.

We have invited 4 women to share a reflection from 2024... something that encouraged or challenged them at a specific time in their lives.

### REFLECTION FROM LISA SCHMIDT



Over the past year, I have had the honor of being on the mentor team for a dear friend who is enrolled in the Master of Divinity program at

Kairos University. One of the best parts of walking alongside her in her journey is that I get to learn some of the things that she is learning without having to take any exams or write any papers! This fall, she took a class on Baptist History, and I was surprised to learn that women have been an integral part of Baptist history since our beginnings in the 17th century. (I was not surprised that they were doing

Kingdom work, but that their names and achievements have been recorded and celebrated.) It has been such an encouragement to learn about these great mothers of our faith, to celebrate their achievements for the Gospel, to hear about their struggles, and to honor their faithfulness to God's calling on their lives.

Baptist women have been teachers, preachers, church planters, theologians, hymn-writers, evangelists, missionaries, and activists since we began. Helen Barret Montgomery (1861-1934), Nannie Helen Burroughs (1879-1961), Dorothy Hazzard (date of birth unknown-died 1674), Anne Steele (1717-1778), and Frannie Lou Hammer (1917-1977) are a few of the women that I learned about.

Women have been called and used by God in Baptist work from our founding through today. My friend, Jenny Jiang, writes: "Women have continually been

equipped by God and filled by the Spirit for his work. I would like women to receive the gift of clarity that they have gifting, they have calling, and

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there is work they need to do.” May you find encouragement in the women of faith who have gone before us and may we continue to be faithful in service to the God who is always at work through his people, both men and women, to redeem and restore all things to himself.

- Lisa Schmidt

*Lisa Schmidt is the Administrative Assistant to the Regional Minister of the Northern California Association of NAB Churches. She and her husband have two boys and attend Oak Hills Church in Folsom, California where she co-leads a women’s bible study. Lisa has a passion for learning, history, and global issues (especially those effecting.*

### REFLECTION FROM CINDY KELM

BLESSED Word of the year 2025  
Variations: bless, blest, bless-ed, blessing  
Ephesians 1:3



**B**less-ed (adjective) is the the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed (verb) us with every spiritual blessing (noun).

I recently realized that Blessed can become a throw-away word. We use it when someone sneezes, “bless you” or “bless” as we roll our eyes in a dismissive way.

I have a favourite t-shirt that declares that I am a “Blessed Grandma” and I truly am. Truly.

In addition to that lovely fact, I am striving to celebrate how God made me and trust that He had a good idea when He thought of me as blessed.

Ephesians 1:3 uses Bless in a variety of ways, reflecting the way that God wants the fullness of the word celebrated in our lives. I want to recognize His bless-ed working in my own life and offer His Blessing to a world that is not even aware of the life that Jesus offers all of us.

For over 60 years, my identity was partly defined by a role I held in the

church as a pastor’s kid and then the pastor’s wife. Since moving to Edmonton Alberta I find myself in a new season of life. I am retired, can sit anywhere I like when I go to church and no one knows my name. How wonderful! I am aware of the ways I am being shaped and blessed by God’s work in me. What God has in mind for Cindy is much more amazing than anything I can imagine.

This past year, I was blessed to be a grandma, a friend, a wife and daughter of Jesus. Oh Lord, may I please be more of a (noun, adjective and verb) blessing in the year ahead. Amen.

- Cindy Kelm

*I am married to my best friend, Harry and we are enjoying doing life together. I am a mother of 3 adult children and have 3 grandchildren. I am a retired teacher who is a dual citizen of both Canada and the US, currently residing in Edmonton Alberta.*

### REFLECTION FROM DONNA STOLZ



Pastor’s wife from the state of Washington

**W**hen God calls you to move, do you hesitate, run away

or run to the movement by faith? Do you see it as a gift or an inconvenience? Well, God has certainly moved my husband John and me physically and spiritually in 2024!

After 2 years of praying and seeking God, in February, John went from Lead to Interim Pastor at our church to begin the move to intentional interim ministry. So, we started purging. We sold most all of what we owned, including our house which sold in 3 days without a realtor and by word of mouth. We did this in preparation to move into our 5th wheel trailer. God is in the details and He had other plans for us. Instead of living in our trailer, we have been blessed with a house to live in, rent free, over the winter to stay closer to the church.

What an incredible journey it has been as God gave us the faith to step through this door to which He so clearly moved us. We have story after story of God’s timing, faithfulness and assurance that we are doing what we are supposed to be doing in this year of transition. We know leaving our church family of 12 years will not be easy, but we are running to God’s movement by faith knowing He has great things planned for us as well as the church!

So, as we run to this movement of faith, I see it as a gift. God calls us to move in various aspects of our lives, and we have decided to MOVE without hesitation or running away. I look forward to the chapter ahead of us in an intentional ministry of assisting churches in transition.

Where is God leading you to move by faith in 2025?

- Donna Stolz

*Donna and her husband John live in the state of Washington. They have 2 sons and 3 grandchildren. They most recently served at Olympic View Baptist Church and are in transition to an intentional interim ministry.*

### REFLECTION FROM CHRISTINE PFORTMUELLER



Executive Director, Bethany Baptist Church, Richmond BC

**T**he year 2024 has been quite a year for me

both personally and professionally. I wouldn’t go so far as to call it my “annus horribilis” like Queen Elizabeth did in 1992, but it was certainly eventful! A few of the things that happened in 2024: a good friend (aged 50) died of cancer in March, my dad was hospitalized and later died in July, my niece got married in August (a good thing!), and another long-time member of our church died in August. Any one of these would have been a

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lot, but there was more: in March the church roof started leaking, and this began a long, challenging, stressful, and expensive roof replacement project – which became my project to manage. It was very overwhelming, both logistically (since I know NOTHING about roofing) and financially. I felt a heavy weight of responsibility on my shoulders, and couldn't see any way that we could afford this as a church. This is where God stepped in and reminded me that I didn't need to see the entire path, because he had it under control. I was reminded over and over again

in many little (and big) ways that we don't need to know exactly how it's all going to work out in the end, all we need to do is be faithful in each step that we take, and trust that God will guide our steps. I have learned over this year that my job is not to solve every problem that could develop in the future: my job is to be faithful in doing the "next step" that is in front of me. A friend shared a quote that she had heard, and it has since become my new motto: "It's not your job to feed the 5,000. It's only to provide the loaves and fish." I bring the loaves and fish, and God feeds the 5,000. God has provided, and continues to provide:

and I am learning every day to trust in his faithfulness.

- Christine Pfortmueller

*She has served at Bethany Baptist in the Vancouver, BC in many capacities: in Children's Ministries as a volunteer and then as Co-Director; as Church Treasurer as a volunteer and then as staff; and as Coordinator of all things rental and finance related. Christine is presently the Executive Director on staff. She has four kids (Mitchell, Connor, Emily and Ryan) and has recently added a new daughter-in-law to the family (Jasmin – married to Mitchell). In her spare time (do we really have spare time these days?) she enjoys reading and relaxing with her family.*



## NAB Woman Leader Focus

### Sara May Cardy Pastor of Groups and Missional Life

*There are so many women who willingly accept leadership roles in our North American Baptist Conference. Thank you for so faithfully serving in the roles that God has called you to fill. May you find renewed joy as you lead in 2025. In this issue we are featuring Sara May Cardy, pastor of groups and missional life at Greenfield Community Church in Edmonton, Alberta*

**Tell us about your journey to becoming a member of the Greenfield ministry staff in Edmonton (Life history, educational background, previous ministry experience).**

My journey into ministry at Greenfield has been a winding path and not one I would have expected. From a young age I had an interest in becoming a doctor and as I entered my teenage years, that interest merged with my growing desire to be engaged with the global church. I grew up hearing stories of my mom's friends that were missionaries and I wanted to experience what God was doing in

other places. As I neared the end of high school, I planned to pursue studies in medicine so that one day I could be involved in medical missions around the world.

During my first two years after high school I spent 6 months and then 7 months living in Guatemala as part of a college extension program. While living there I was part of a local church and had the opportunity to spend time with a number of different organizations around the country. I felt comfortable and at home in the communities I was part of there and easily could have made Guatemala home but, at the time, it seemed that

pursuing medical school was still the right path forward so I moved to Calgary to start my undergrad studies.

While I was in Calgary studying a Science and then Sociology degree, I got connected to my first NAB church which was right up the street from where I was living. My first connection was with Brad Friesen who at the time, was the Missions Pastor. I started by helping out with the International Fellowship that met before the service Sunday mornings. From there, I started to get more connected with the young adults group at Brentview and as my connections within the church grew, I

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was invited into broader conversations around missions and brought onto the missions lead team. In the summer of 2008 we took our first young adults team to partner with Youth For Christ Northern Ireland to help with some summer programming. It was on that trip that the trajectory of my life changed and I had the realization that I wasn't being called into a life in medicine, but I into vocational ministry of some sort, and my world was rocked. I had no idea what that would look like. I continued pursuing my undergrad studies (while changing majors), and kept my job at the doctor's office while I waited to see where this new direction would take me. Through a series of staff changes within our church, I was asked to initially take on our work with international missions part-time, and that turned into a full-time job, combined with administrative work and from there I feel like my ministry journey took on a life of its own. In the almost 10 years that I was on staff at Brentview, my job title and responsibilities continued to expand and for the last 5 years I was there my role was Director of Small Groups and Strategic Partnerships. During that time I continued to deepen our relationship with our missional partners, I ran our annual missions conference, I was involved in numerous short-term missions and partner care trips, helped to put in support systems for our small group leaders and developed significant partnerships within our local community and the university. Then, unexpectedly, in the spring of 2020, I knew with a deep certainty, that my time at Brentview was coming to an end and God was asking me to trust him for whatever might come next. It was a very difficult decision to leave but I knew that this invitation from God was one that I needed to follow even though I had no idea what I would be doing after.

I initially planned on using that time to finish off my Masters of Divinity that I had been working on through Sioux Falls Seminary but as the fall began,

I was approached by Cam Roxburgh and invited to work with him at the NAB International Office in the area of Missional Initiatives. For the next number of months, I studied and helped Cam with the Year of Bonfire gatherings and other online training opportunities. After I finished my degree, I spent the next couple of years working remotely for both NAB and Cam's church in Surrey, BC.

As restrictions in BC were lifting, and more in-person gatherings were happening in BC, I knew that my time with The Neighbourhood Church would be coming to a close and towards the end of 2021, I received an email from a friend on staff at Greenfield with a job description for a new role they were hiring. At that point I hadn't been considering another church leadership position but Stephanie was persistent so I sent in my resume. All along the way, God continued to surprise me with just how much the values at the heart of Greenfield Community Church lined up with the passions God had given me. I entered my visitation weekend with the staff and ministry council with a curiosity and openness to this being the place I would land. In ways I couldn't have anticipated, by the time I got back to Calgary, I knew Greenfield was a community that I wanted to be part of. Thankfully, they felt the same way and I have been part of the pastoral staff at Greenfield for over two years now and I continue to grow in my love for our church community and the neighbourhoods around us.

*If there is one thing I have learned in my ministry journey it is that I need to expect that God will work through situations in ways I often can't anticipate. Even in the midst of some very painful and difficult circumstances, and seasons of confusion and uncertainty, he has proven himself to be faithful.*

I am so thankful for that moment sitting at a desk at a friend's home in Northern Ireland, 17 years ago, when I first caught a glimpse that my life was going to be different than I had planned.

## **What responsibilities do you have as a staff member at Greenfield?**

My role at Greenfield Community Church is Pastor of Groups and Missional Life. Within our groups ministry, I have the privilege of coming alongside our different group leaders to support them as they lead our various Connect, Learning and Life Groups. I also lead one of our Life Groups and co-lead our Alpha group. Under the banner of Missional Life, I lead the Neighbourhood Care Network which is a partnership of two churches that started during Covid to address the needs of those in our surrounding neighbourhoods. Over the last couple of years that has led to us having neighbourhood dinners for Christmas and Easter and our most recent Christmas dinner was attended by just over one hundred people from the community. We also are involved in our community through a number of different events throughout the year like our September Movie in the Lot, supporting our Community League on Community League Day, a Community-Wide Garage Sale and Car Boot sale, supporting our local community garden and most recently by hosting a monthly Collective Kitchen evening in partnership with the Edmonton Foodbank. I have also been connecting with the missionaries and other partners that are supported by Greenfield and I'm involved in mentoring with some of our young women.

## **What are some of the joys you have experienced and challenges you have encountered in your leadership positions.**

One of the greatest joys I have experienced in all of my leadership positions has been watching people discover what it looks like for them to live their life with Christ. For some that has meant watching them discover their own leadership potential and that their life really does make an impact on the world around them. For others, it has been the discovery that God loves

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## Purpose Statement

Women's Connection exists to connect women of the North American Baptist Conference, encouraging them in their desire to serve God. Our team is committed to providing resources to help women deepen their faith and equip them for ministry wherever God places them.

## Our Core Values

### CALLING AND WORTH

We value the essential role women play in ministry.

### QUALITY RESOURCES

We value God's Word and seek resources that are Biblically sound, applicable and accessible.

### BROADER CONNECTION

We value supporting the broader vision of the North American Baptist Conference and developing a connection among North American Baptist Conference women.

### LEGACY AND THE FUTURE

We value the legacy of women who have gone before us and are committed to engaging the next generation.



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them, and sees them and wants to be in relationship with them. One of my other great joys is getting to make connections with those outside the church whether it's being part of a community Farmer's market, helping at the Food Bank, or just being a safe space in the community for children and families through various events.

One of the more difficult challenges I have encountered in my leadership positions is coming to terms with my own limits as a leader. I am highly empathetic and always want to help my team or those who are walking through difficult seasons and I have had to learn that I cannot be all things to all people. I have had to learn the importance of saying no to some things so that I can more fully step into the tasks or situations that I need to be leading. Along those lines, I have also learned that if I try to do too much, I take away opportunities from others to also step into leadership so if I want to be a leader that equips others, I need to sometimes give things away.

### In light of the joys and challenges you are experiencing, do you have any nuggets of wisdom to offer other women who are in leadership positions?

I think that one of the key things I have learned is that it is important to seek out the wisdom of other leaders that have gone before me as well as finding community with other women that are in leadership roles. Over the last few years I have been able to meet regularly with a group of women, serving in different leadership roles in Canada and the US

and being able to learn from them and support each other has been a sustaining factor in my ministry journey.

I have also learned the importance of practicing soul care for myself. I know that in order to lead others well I need to be the healthiest version of myself that I can be so creating space in my life for counselling, to meet regularly with a spiritual director and to carve out time for rest and retreat has been really important. The practice of starting and ending my day with times of prayer has been a big piece of this. Sometimes leading in ministry, especially as a women in ministry, can feel lonely and by prayerfully going over my day, and then reflecting on it in the evening, I am reminded that even if I may feel alone in a particular situation, Jesus sees me and is present with. Me.

### Are there any books or studies about leadership that you would recommend?

I'm not quite sure if this would be classified as a leadership book but one of the books that has shaped me in ministry is, *The Shaping of Things to Come* by Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch.

*Faithful Presence* by David Fitch has been a key resource that has guided me in ministry. More recently, the book, *Reframation* by Mark Nelson has given me some new framework for how the church can engage with the world around us.

One series that is more specifically linked to leadership is Patrick Lencionci's work, especially the books *Five Dysfunctions of Team* and *The 6 Types of Working Genius*.

## WHITE CROSS USA UPDATE

from Debbie Long, Bismarck, North Dakota

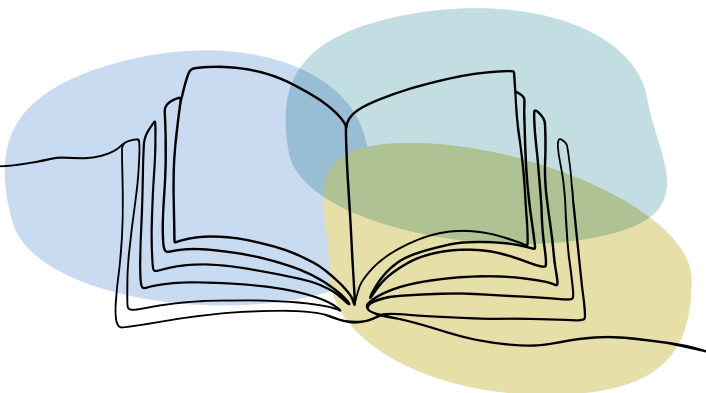


### White Cross

White Cross USA sent 3 shipping containers in 2024. One was loaded directly in Cando, North Dakota. A generous gifting of medical items was sent to Cameroon as the Cando hospital relocated to a new facility. A local Bismarck hospital donated baby bassinets, exam tables, and IV poles.

Thank you to all who pray and provide fabric, medical supplies, and finances to continue to bless our mission in Cameroon through White Cross.

# WINTER STUDY BOOKS



## BIBLE STUDY

Love God Greatly ([www.lovegodgreatly.com](http://www.lovegodgreatly.com)) provides free online Bible studies for women around the world, to inspire, to encourage, and to equip them to get into God's Word.



## Firm Foundation

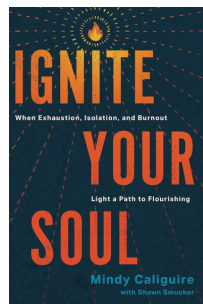
Do you long for a deeper, more unshakable faith? Are you seeking a stronger foundation in your walk with God? Dive into the core

truths of your faith with *Firm Foundation*, and discover the strength and stability that comes from a life firmly rooted in God's Word.

As you journey through these 30 foundational truths, you will be equipped to face life's challenges with confidence and hope as well as fall more in love with our Savior, Jesus Christ.

*Firm Foundation: Building Your Life on the Unshakable Truth of God's Word* is a six-week Bible study exploring the foundational truths of the Christian faith and how these truths daily shape and transform our lives. This journal includes daily readings and SOAP verses, devotions to aid in understanding, reflection questions, and encouragement from women around the world. Perfect for personal or small group study, *Firm Foundation* will encourage us to join in with others in praising Jesus as we stand firm of our unshakable faith in Jesus.

## SOUL CARE



## Ignite Your Soul

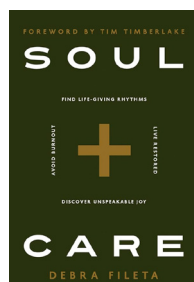
by Mindy Caliguire

Revive Your Whole Self: Spiritually, Mentally, and Emotionally

Burned out? Exhausted? Feeling isolated and like there's no end in sight? Find hope, direction, and a path to renewed life. *Ignite Your Soul* is a lifeline to help

you restore your spiritual, emotional, and mental well-being and navigate the complex landscape of soul care within the communities you live and serve in. Whether you seek refreshment for yourself or those you lead, you'll explore six key practices that lead to whole-self flourishing: attention, participation, delight, humility, silence, rest.

*Ignite Your Soul* walks through the journey from pre-burnout to destruction and the path to healings so that you can walk out of your own ashes and into practices like journaling, prayer, and a rule of life and more, to thrive no matter what you face. *Ignite Your Soul* is a lifeline to help you restore your spiritual and mental well-being within the communities you life and serve in.



## Soul Care

by Debra Fileta

In our fast-paced culture plagued with burnout, stress, and chronic fatigue, we often find that we're functioning out of emptiness. What would it be like to experience a fullness in our life that was truly lasting and regenerative?

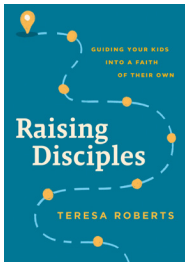
In *Soul Care*, licensed counselor Debra Fileta shows you how Jesus' own life rhythms can guide you to true health and rest, teaching you how to live full rather than empty. Rooted in Scripture and expertly informed by clinical psychology, *Soul Care* identifies six life-giving practices from the life of Jesus that address your whole person—mind, body, and spirit. As you are guided toward your own practice of biblical self-care, you will learn how

- the Bible responds to common myths about soul care
- a lack of soul care impacts your relationships, ministries, and careers
- to recognize the signs and signals of burnout and respond proactively with practical solutions

Empty people cannot fill up others. As you learn to be filled as Jesus was by intentional rhythms and practices, you will experience renewed energy, motivation, and strength to serve others as you never have before!

## PARENTING

# Raising Disciples



Every child—from infancy to adolescence—is being discipled by someone or something. The question is: Are you willing to disciple them for Jesus' sake?

Accessible and actionable for parents of children birth to 13 years old, *Raising Disciples* offers a detailed discipleship map and directional markers to nurture your child's spiritual growth with Christ.

During her more than 25 years in children's ministry alongside her academic work training up children's ministry leaders, Dr. Teresa Roberts noticed that parents and even children's ministry leaders seemed to struggle with knowing how to disciple children past the more-intuitive preschool ages. A foundational family and ministry resource, *Raising Disciples* reflects the developmental needs that will empower children to grow in their knowledge of God's Word, develop a vocabulary of faith, engage in spiritual practices, and cultivate a deep, personal relationship with God. Featuring intuitive, quick-reference visual aids, researched expertise, real-life examples from the ministry of Jesus, and relational warmth, *Raising Disciples* is a must-have resource to give you a discipleship pathway for raising spiritually grounded children in today's complex world.

You are loved beyond measure.  
You are called and equipped to lead with faith and courage.  
You are never alone—God walks with you every step of the way.

April Wahl Women's Connection  
Missio Church Bismarck, North Dakota Youth Minister

# Praising God for His Provision: The Saker Water Project

At our 2024 Triennial Luncheon in St Paul, Women's Connection took an offering for the Saker Baptist College Water project: providing an adequate source of water for the students and staff at the school, as well as provide clean water for the approximately 200 people in the surrounding community. The goal for the project was \$14,000.

This email came from Maureen Moody with news that the project was totally funded. Praise God!



Hello Jean,

I'm happy to report the needed funds have been raised! Thank you so much for your support of this project!

The project added 1 new bore hole, 3 new water pipelines from the main tank to the dormitories, 20 new filling points, 3 - 5,000 Litre water tanks and 3 - 10,000 Litre water tanks.

There is now enough water and water pressure for all the students, staff and nearby community. Over 1,400 individuals are benefiting from this project.

Below are a few photos for you to choose from for your newsletter.

Grace and Peace,  
Maureen Moody  
Acting NAB Cameroon Field Director



CONNECT  
WITH US

North American  
Baptist Conference

1219 Pleasant Grove Blvd.  
Roseville, CA 95678



[wm.nabc@gmail.com](mailto:wm.nabc@gmail.com)  
[www.nabconference.org](http://www.nabconference.org)