

# TouchPoint

The North American Baptist Conference Women's Connection Newsletter

REFLECTIONS FROM 2023

## Women in Leadership – Ally Turner



We have been highlighting women connected to NAB who are serving in ministry leadership within their churches and communities. Our hope is by doing so, we can encourage and support other NAB women in leadership. We would like you to meet Ally Turner, Women's Ministry Coordinator at Grace Community Church in Detroit Michigan.

### What drew you to Grace Community Church in Detroit as their Women's Ministry Coordinator? Describe your role as coordinator.

My husband and I started attending Grace around 2000. I was a high school special education teacher and coached girls softball and basketball. Our first daughter was born in March of 2001 and I decided to put teaching on hold and stay home a few years while we raised a family. I thought I could meet other stay at home moms

by volunteering in the nursery at Grace's Women's Tuesday Morning Bible Study. My first day was 9/11. Hard to forget that day. After that first year, I realized I needed to be AT those bible study tables rather than in the nursery. I met so many wonderful women around those tables. I learned so much from the scriptures, the faithfulness of God, the sweetness of sisterhood in Christ, caring for one another amidst life's joys and sorrows. After 5 years, I received leadership mentoring and began serving as a table facilitator and did so for years.

I was getting ready to go back to teaching when our youngest daughter went into middle school in 2018. That is when the previous Women's Ministry Director of 30 years, Penny, asked me to pray about taking over her roll. I was very apprehensive initially because I didn't see myself as a "planner". And this roll requires a lot of planning. She responded with that famous line, "God doesn't call the equipped; He equips the called". And she encouraged me that I'll have a team of women with the planning gifts that I felt were missing in my skill set. She was right, of course! The yes to her invitation felt scary, but

also, it felt right. I knew God wanted to grow me in courage and confidence in Him. And He continues to do that today after 5 years in this role as the women's ministry coordinator.

As the Coordinator, I oversee multiple ministries:

1. TBS (Tuesday Bible Study) has been a pillar for over 30 years. We host about 100 women each Tuesday.
2. Senior Sisters Luncheons is the fourth Thursday of the month where an average of 60 women gather to have lunch, hear a speaker, share prayers and occasionally do a craft.
3. Grace Moms Group has about 30 moms with kids under 5 years old and meet twice a month on Wednesdays for a devotional time, worship, parenting discussions and prayer.
4. Book club meets first Mondays of the month.

Plus monthly meetings with my volunteer leader team to plan:

Multiple gatherings throughout the year: Soup, Song & Story night in the Fall, Paint Parties in the Spring, Ice Cream Socials in the summer.



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# May the women we serve grow in the knowledge of their belovedness, their gifts, the power of the Holy Spirit, their passions and callings to the Glory of God, and our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

We host a retreat every other year. 2021 Arise, Shine for the Glory of the Lord is upon you... was my first retreat.

We just returned from my second retreat: 2023 Abide in the Vine, where 200 women traveled to Maumee Bay Lodge and Conference center in Ohio for 2 nights of worship, teaching, prayer sessions, nature walks, fun and fellowship.

## What are some of the joys you have experienced and challenges you have encountered in this role?

I'm riding a joy wave right now. Retreats are such hard work, yet, the stories I'm hearing of breakthroughs, and prayers answered and women experiencing the powerful presence of God in worship... give me so much JOY... is there anything better than that? Also, at the end of each ministry season, we'll have a celebration meal where women can share testimonies of God's goodness and faithfulness. Hearing stories of transformation is just the best!

Some of the struggles I've experienced in this role have been in leadership conflicts. Navigating different personalities in serving together can be a challenge. In my naivety I thought working with people in church would be easy. We all want to love and serve God plus prefer one other, right? LOL. Each ministry I oversee has 2 volunteer facilitators that I meet with to pray and plan for their gatherings. One ministry leader team in particular has had multiple differences of opinions as to how they see the group should flow. So I've had to learn a number of conflict resolution strategies in order to keep this leader team working well together. It's been hard, but good. God is teaching us all so much about confession, forgiveness, listening, understanding, empathy, on and on.

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

I have 3 nuggets that have helped me:

1. Take a prayer day. My boss, our lead pastor, reminds me to do this too. I have my time in the morning with the Lord, but then quickly go into task-mode. Emails, checklists, etc. There is something so sweet about carving out a whole day to commune with Jesus. To behold Him. To worship Him. To quiet my soul long enough to Listen to Him.
2. Have a spiritual director or mentor. There are some frustrating things that can happen in ministry and on church staff teams that I've needed to process with a safe, non-judgmental, 3rd party. If I complain to someone I work with, that could cause division, and I certainly do not want to do that. My spiritual director has encouraged me, prayed for me, imparted wise counsel and helped me see my own blind-spots.
3. Meet with and learn from women that are different than you. Because our world is broken in many ways – people divided by race, economics, political affiliations, and heritage – our desire at Grace is to take these fragments of brokenness and bring them together to form a beautiful mosaic where we can find unity in Christ. I believe it is important to have diverse leader teams to reflect God's Kingdom and intentionally, creatively serve the women in your church.

## Tell us a little about your family – brag a little!

Bill, my husband and best friend of 26 years loves to travel, sail, ski, and tinker with 3D printing stuff. My oldest daughter, Emma, 22 graduated

from Marquette University in Milwaukee and moved to Colorado with some friends. She is a registered nurse, avid climber, hiker, skier. Audrey, 21 our second born is a student at Wayne State University in Detroit. She loves to shop, snowboard, and serve as a youth group leader at our church. Will, 18, our only son is a senior in high school. He enjoys swimming, weight lifting and is currently trying to decide where to go to college in the fall. Our baby, Kayley, 16 enjoys reading, drawing and playing the guitar.

## Are there any books or studies about leadership that you can recommend to our readers?

So many good ones....

*The Team Jesus Built*, by Janet Thompson

*Leadership and Self Deception by the Arbinger Institute* (not faith-based, but very applicable to faith spaces)

*Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* by Peter Scazzero

*Be the Bridge* by Latasha Morrison

I'm learning a lot right now from:

Jon Mark Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* and Dr. Anita Phillips, *The Garden Within*

## Any final last thoughts?

God bless your readers and their ministries and families! What an honor and privilege to be doing Kingdom Work with you all. May the women we serve grow in the knowledge of their belovedness, their gifts, the power of the Holy Spirit, their passions and callings to the Glory of God, and our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

And oh yes ... "I love to run. I'm a long-distance runner. I've completed 15 marathons and will be running the Boston Marathon in April."



# Connecting in the Great Lakes Association



Women's Connection Team for GLA

BY JEAN EWING

My road trip from Buffalo, New York to Detroit, Michigan was peaceful and uneventful. It always is exciting to spend time with team members Fabiola Campos and April Wahl. Janie Holley, the Regional Minister's wife in the GLA, was going to join us for the weekend events in the region. My greatest excitement though, was the promise of meeting more women who faithfully serve in our NAB churches. We have touched the lives and been inspired by women in 6 other NAB regions through our connecting luncheons.

April was delayed by an early North Dakota snow storm and arrived just in time to set up for our You Glow Girl time

*Thank you for an opportunity to share with you in this ministry. Also, the lunch was lovely.*

*- Bethel Baptist*

with the young women in the area churches. The high schoolers who came were challenged to be who God wants them to be through a time of interaction and challenge from God's word. Our desire as a team is to encourage the next generation of women leaders in their partnership with God to discover where He wants to use them most effectively.

Our Saturday luncheon was a thank you to NAB women who serve as leaders in the local GLA churches. It was also a time of being reminded about what is happening in the North American Baptist Conference and specifically in Women's Connection. The added joy was spending time with other women who share the desire to see that women in their churches are encouraged and are offered opportunities to grow.

As women enjoyed a delightful lunch, they shared experiences, plans, and thoughts in response to a series of questions and topics about women in ministry through our 'Table Talk' time. A highlight of our time together was hearing more about the NAB White Cross program at Hope Community from Gert Lowery, coordinator. Several women had a renewed interest in providing vital medical supplies to Cameroon.

April, through a personal testimony, challenged us to be intentional about encouraging and supporting the younger women in our churches by making space for them in the ministries in the church.

Thank you, Hope Community for opening your doors and your hearts to women who faithfully lead and serve in our GLA churches. Thank you, Fabiola, April and Janie for joining me on this exciting journey of meeting and encouraging women who faithfully serve.



GLA Women Praying

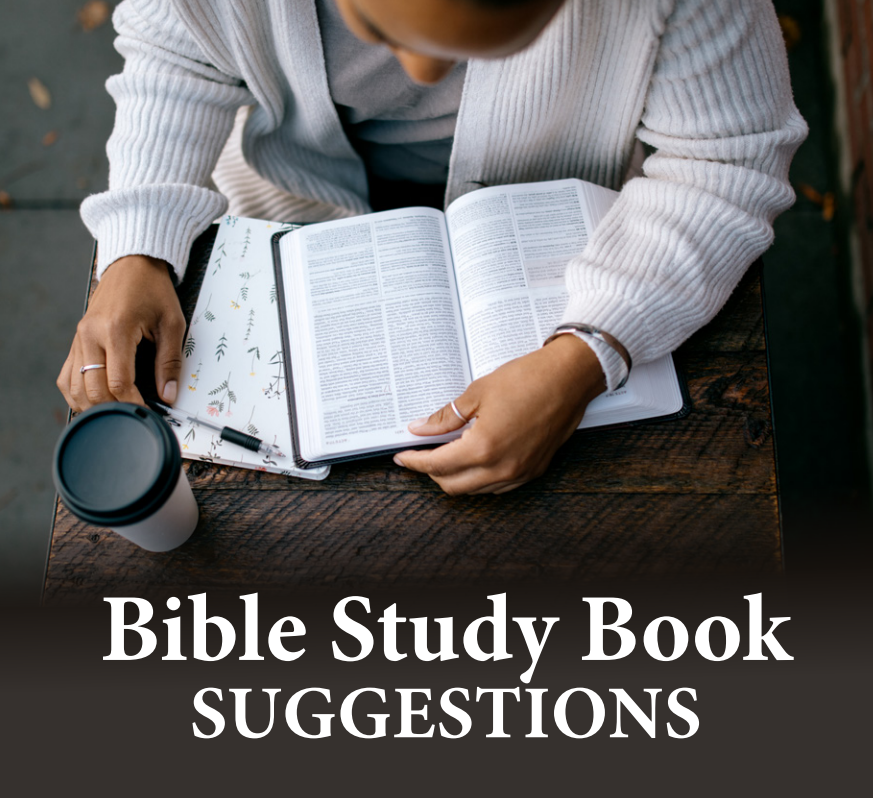


You Glow Girl

*I have been encouraged and inspired. Thank you!*

*Thank you for bringing us together to be appreciated and encouraged.*





# Bible Study Book SUGGESTIONS

During our luncheon we asked GLA women to share their favorite (and yes actually used) book and Bible studies. You can find descriptions of these resources through Amazon and Christian Book Distributors.

- 1 Jenny Allen  
*Nothing to Prove*
- 2 Kay Arthur  
*Covenant Precepts*
- 3 Courtney Doctor/  
Melissa Kruger  
*Remember Your Joy*  
(Salvation Stories In  
the Old Testament)
- 4 Courtney Doctor  
*From Garden to  
Glory*
- 5 Lisa Harper  
*Job*
- 6 Susan Hunt  
*Spiritual Mothering-  
Women's Ministry  
Leadership  
Development Book*
- 7 Lauren Iback  
(Vashti McKenzie)  
*Strength in the  
Struggle*
- 8 Kristi McLelland  
• *Jesus and Women*  
• *Gospel on the  
Ground—Acts*
- 9 Kelly Minter  
*Finding God Faithful  
No Other Gods*
- 10 Beth Moore  
*A Woman's Heart-  
God's Dwelling Place*
- 11 Priscilla Schirer  
• *Discerning the  
Voice of God*  
• *Job*
- 12 Lysa TerKeurst  
*Finding I Am*
- 13 Love God Greatly  
• *Galatians*  
• *Esther*  
• *Choose Brave*
- 14 Bible Study Fellowship  
offers excellent Bible  
study options

## White Cross at Hope Community Baptist Church

The White Cross work is very important part of our mission's ministry here at Hope Church. The faithfulness of all those that volunteer to support our brothers and sisters in the Cameroon Baptist Health Services is such a blessing. We get together once a month in the morning and the evening, from September to April. There is something for everyone to do in helping with roll bandages, sewing draw sheets, diapers, baby blankets, cutting 4 x 4's, knitting baby caps, even putting labels on bags, and packaging the items for the long trip, first to North Dakota then to Cameroon.

We are so fortunate to have the local Hotels donate sheets that we can use to rip and then roll them with a bible verse included in each one. The work is not only being accomplished by members of the church but also new friends from the community. We can see God working in the friendships that start while providing support to this crucial ministry. We encourage everyone to come, even if just sit and visit, have a cup of coffee and snack.

It's such a joy to be working together to share the love of Jesus in this special ministry. Supporting White Cross has been a deep commitment and long tradition that we want to continually serve by providing tangible medical needs to the hospitals in Cameroon and Nigeria.

Gert Lowery  
Hope Community  
Detroit, Michigan Area

Thank you for capturing the commitment that Hope has for White Cross. Many who receive the supplies you prepare and send are blessed by this commitment.

**Information about joining Gert and her team in preparing White Cross supplies can be found at Canada: [info@whitecrosscanada.ca](mailto:info@whitecrosscanada.ca) and United States: [whitecross@centurybaptist.org](mailto:whitecross@centurybaptist.org)**





# Around the Globe – Women in Japan Connecting through Seminars

BY YURI NAKANO

There were huge answers to prayer over these past months as we were able to have Ladies' Seminars in several churches that had never experienced them before. One of the major goals for this year was to be able to reach all the JBC churches with the seminars, and I am so thankful that we were able to! We had good attendance at most of them, and so far the feedback has been positive.

A Ladies Seminar was held at Higashi Muko church. The ladies really enjoyed discussing the characters in the book of Ruth together. I am glad that they value these seminar and they look forward to more.

In November we met with ladies in Osaka. Our topic was on prayer! We are happy that the women came away encouraged by different ways of praying and left with more confidence and joy in praying.

Now that all the JBC churches have experienced the seminars, we are praying that they will continue to enjoy coming together to study God's Word in community as sisters in Christ.



Women in Japan Meet to Study and Pray



# Leadership Together

## NorCal Cohort Focuses on Soul Care

*Our soul is like an inner stream of water, which gives strength, direction, and harmony to every element of our life. When that stream is as it should be, we are constantly refreshed and exuberant in all we do, because the soul itself is profusely rooted in the vastness of God and His Kingdom, including nature; all else within us is enlivened and directed by that stream.*

Renovation of the Heart – Dallas Willard

The setting was the welcoming home of one of the cohort's members, Dottie Henry. In this relaxed atmosphere the women in staff leadership explored the topic of caring for your soul in the midst of the busy life of a woman in leadership.

The day was spent in open conversation about caring for one's soul as we viewed a training session videotaped by Mindy Caliguire.

With the help of Mindy, co-founder

of Soul Care, a spiritual formation ministry that exists to increase 'soul health', the women were challenged to make their relationship with God the priority that drives not only their personal life but overflows into the relationships with those met in their ministry roles. As leaders we are challenged to lead from the soul. When our souls are alive to God – profusely rooted in Him this kind of leadership emerges:

Mindy encouraged women in leadership to engage in these practices to help lead at maximum confidence.

### Characteristics of those who lead from the soul

- They are peace-filled in crises as well as in calm times. And during crises, they do not revert to authoritarian or avoidance behaviors.
- They know intimately what it means to be part of or create community.
- They do not depend on themselves for the vision of the organization.
- They can give power away without feeling a loss of self.
- They are connected intimately to God.
- They do not project their pain or addiction on others.
- They do not burn out or succumb to stress.
- They practice integrity, reflection, and collaboration.
- They have a strong sense of humor and creativity.
- They are courageous.
- Above all, they are life-giving.

*From Janet Hagberg, Real Power*

#### **Soul Searching:**

Keeping in touch with what is going on inside

Journal-Ask-Listen

**PAGE**

#### **Spiritual Friendship:**

Having a safe relational space to process the stuff of life and leadership

**PERSON**

#### **Intentionality:**

Rule of Life for the Unruly Lives of leaders for holistic Flourishing

**PLAN**

Liz Stevahn, from 180Lodi, shared from her experiences walking the El Camino. This life changing adventure was an opportunity for Liz to spend time relying on God and reflecting on His goodness.

The interaction of the women in this cohort have been an encouragement to each of the women as they serve faithfully where God has placed them.

*Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.*

Proverbs 4:23



# Triennial 2024 • St Paul, Minnesota • July 11-14, 2024



At the center of Christian peace is not a philosophy or a practice, it is a person – the God-man Jesus Christ: “For he himself is our peace” (Ephesians 2:14a NIV). It is this peace in which everything was created and humanity was called to live. It is this peace, grounded in the person and nature of Jesus, that Christ followers are to reflect into the chaos of the world around them as the imago Dei.

Christ’s church, being the presence of God’s Kingdom on earth, is charged

with making and reflecting his peace in the world. Because his Spirit inhabits his people, we as the body of Christ are to take up Christ’s mission to restore peace with God, as well as with others, with ourselves, and with creation. This is reflected in the person and nature of Christ in three ways:

- Christ’s power to restore peace between an individual and God.
- Christ’s desire to establish peace within the community of believers.
- Christ’s call for the Church to extend his peace to the world as we engage

individuals outside the family of faith and engage with creation that groans in anticipation of redemption.

Christ commissions his church to be his presence of peace in a world of discord. Triennial 2024 will be all about living into the peace we have in Christ and exploring how we represent Christ’s peace.

More information can be found on the NAB website [www.nabconference.org](http://www.nabconference.org)

To register and to see the Triennial video go to [www.NABTriennial.com](http://www.NABTriennial.com)

**Women’s Connection Luncheon • Friday, July 12, 2024  
12:15-2:15pm • Theme: Becoming a Woman of Peace**

## Prepare your hearts for Triennial

### Perfect Peace: Planting My Eyes on Jesus

by Rachel Wojo



**A 31-day Bible Reading Plan and Journal**

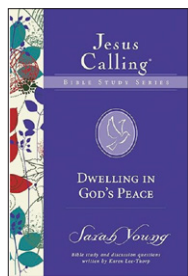
Discovering real peace can appear to be challenging. But peace doesn’t come from a

place; perfect peace is found in Jesus. This 31 day Bible Reading Plan and Journal will help you discover sweet rest in God’s promises and establish the deep roots of perfect peace.

It will give you 31 days of planting your eyes on Jesus and finding rest for your soul.

### Dwelling In God’s Peace

by Sarah Young



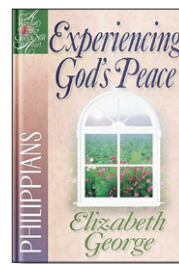
Anyone who has appreciated the “Jesus Calling” devotional book, will really be blessed by this study – the seventh study in the Jesus Calling Bible

Study series. In this study, you will explore what the Bible says about the peace that God offers when you trust in Christ and rely on the Holy Spirit’s work in your life.

The study also includes devotional readings from Jesus Calling, selected passages of scripture, Bible Study questions and additional questions to help you apply the material. It can be used for personal reflection or in a small group setting.

### Experiencing God’s Peace

by Elizabeth George



In this study, Elizabeth George helps women know God’s perfect peace in all circumstances

in their lives. They will also discover how to respond to the needs of others, become mature in Christ and overcome anxiety. The heart response sections help readers grasp Paul’s teachings and focus on God’s loving provisions.

Though this book was written many years ago, Elizabeth George is still able to capture the beauty of God’s peace in Philippians and help women live this out in their daily lives.

**CONNECT WITH US**



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