



e-Java Moments

An e-newsletter of the North American Baptist Conference Women's Ministry

July/August 2016

The articles in this issue emphasize the themes in chapters 7,8,9 in Amy Lively's Book *How to Love Your Neighbor*

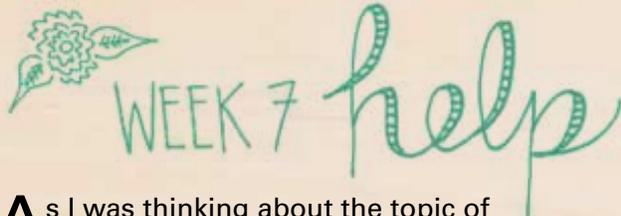


SHARE A CUP WITH JEAN...

2016 Women's Ministry Theme

Who's My Neighbor?

BY JEAN EWING, TEAM LEADER
Williamsville, New York



As I was thinking about the topic of unwrapping your gifts, I began to think about memorable gifts I have received and the joy I had unwrapping them. The anticipation and excitement were overwhelming. These gifts came from those who loved and cared about me.

Amy Lively challenges us to picture a beautifully wrapped package, with a tag with your name and the inscription "from your Heavenly Father" written on it. Inside the package is a gift He has given to you to use every day. In chapter 7 of *How to Love Your Neighbor Without Being Weird*, Amy explores the three lists of spiritual gifts found in 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4. What gift would you find in that special present from Him?

The most profound thing that Amy shares is that "these gifts are from God to you, but they are for others." (*How to Love Your Neighbor Without Being Weird*, page 133). Our spiritual gifts are given to us for the benefit of helping others. God has uniquely designed you to help other people.

"Each one of us needs to look after the good of the people around us, asking ourselves, 'How can I help?'"

– Romans 15:2 MSG

We "serve" our neighborhoods and communities, but we "help" a neighbor as an individual. Putting aside our own agenda to meet the physical needs of our neighbor could lead to sharing the gospel down the road.

Amy suggests 20 tips to be a helpful neighbor on page 33 of her online, downloadable Participant's Guide at www.howtoloveyourneighbor.com. Each of the tips costs nothing, but at the same time they are costly; they require a sacrifice of your time.

As this summer unfolds why not take an online quiz to help you unwrap your spiritual gifts? After you take the quiz, plan how your gifts can be used practically and naturally to love your neighbor.

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Knocking on Doors? No Way!

WEEK 8 *give* Say What?



BY FABIOLA CAMPOS

Knocking on Doors? No Way!

I have said this before: I like meeting new people and enjoy talking about almost anything. I could be in a gathering where there is nobody I am familiar with and by the end of the night, I could easily have a couple of new friends. I am, as they say, an extrovert. Therefore, when we moved into a new neighborhood, the next logical step was to go out and meet the neighbors.

At first, I was very excited about it, but as we were on our way to our neighbors' homes, things began to change. I got so nervous and anxious that I told my husband that we should go back. I thought it was going to be easy, that I knew what I wanted to say, how to introduce myself . . . but as soon as the first person opened the door, I froze! I mumbled a couple of words and left as quickly as I had arrived. I can't imagine what my neighbors' first impression of me was! It was a failure. I had failed. And I felt terrible about it.

Let me put it this way: if God had a toolbox and needed a tool for a very specific job, he would have picked you. And you would have been both ready and qualified to do the job.

I am sharing this story because through this experience I discovered something very important about meeting your neighbors. I realized that no matter how easy it may be for someone to meet new people, there is something difficult—almost terrifying—about knocking on the door of a complete stranger.

Let's face it. It takes a certain kind of personality with a certain kind of courage to do it, and most people don't have it in themselves. And yet we all are expected, as good disciples (or at least as decent neighbors) to do just that. Do you feel the tension? You are expected to do something you feel you are not qualified to do. Or are you qualified? I believe I have something from the Bible that will change the way you think about this.

You will be surprised to find out that most people in Scripture felt they were not qualified for the job God was sending them to do. But in Matthew 10:1, the Bible says: "Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness." And then, in verses 5 and 16 it says that Jesus sent them. I invite you to notice three things: He called them, gave them authority, and sent them to go and meet new people with the Good News.

When Jesus sends the Twelve he says, "I am sending you." He is not saying, "I am sending someone before you to prepare people for when you come." Neither is he saying, "I've got a special miracle I am going to do, so when you get there people will already be expecting you." He says, "I Am Sending You." Of all the things God could have used to proclaim the coming of the Kingdom, he choose you. Let me put it this way: if God had a toolbox and needed a tool for a very specific job, he would have picked you. And you would have been both ready and qualified to do the job.

Perhaps the only piece of advice I can offer is to rethink the method. Maybe knocking on doors is not your thing, but it is possible that you are a great cook, an amazing host, or a great gardener. Or maybe, like in my case, you don't mind using your car to give your neighbors' kids a ride to school. You will be amazed at the opportunities that God will present for you to meet your neighbors. Remember, He did not pick a method. He picked you. You are God's tool. Yes, you! God has chosen and equipped you to spread the Good News in your neighborhood.

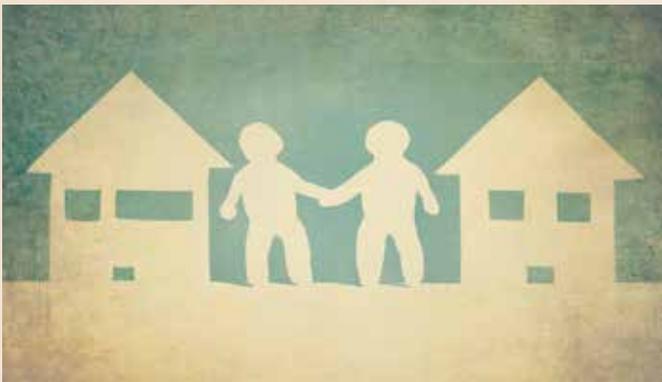


Martha Unleashed



BY AMBER DOWD

My street is in a time of transition. Three houses have sold in the past two months. We've been peeking out front, watching to see who gets out of the arriving U-Hauls. My kids are doing head counts: two girls, no boys in one house. One girl, no boys in another house. The third house is still vacant: is that the inspector or the owner? Who will be coming next?

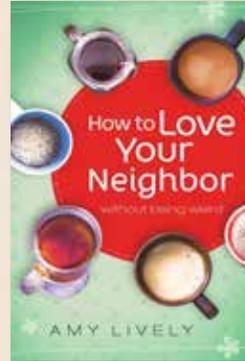


My street is therefore also in a time of opportunity. It is an opportunity to do "Welcome" well. We are starting out as strangers. The challenge is to change our status. When we moved in six years ago someone left us cookies on our front porch. It was nice, but I never actually met the people. They are still strangers. I want go a step further with our new neighbors, to do an act of welcome that serves as the first of many connections. Our welcome will hopefully declare that our family intends to start a relationship with theirs.

When viewed through a missional lens, to "welcome" is more than just a one-time



How to Love Your Neighbor?



Have you gotten your free copy of *How to Love Your Neighbor Without Being Weird* yet?

Contact Heather Senges hsenges@telus.net with your address and church affiliation.

Feel too tired and exhausted to love your neighbors today? The good news is that admitting to God we cannot do this on our own strength is all He requires to do amazing things.

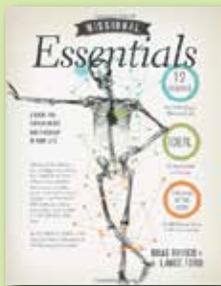
"Lord, I am so tired. So weighed down. I confess that I cannot love my family and neighbors the way I should today. I invite You to take over and be the patience, love, and compassion that I lack right now. Amen"...

hospitable gesture. Biblical welcome is a declaration that we intend to receive, embrace, and love the person(s) we are welcoming. We intend to make them one of our own. As believers we have experienced the ultimate welcome. We have been received into the family of God. This reception is at the core of the Gospel. None of us deserve God's welcome and yet we have been given eternal welcome through Christ. It makes sense to me then, that as a Christian I am called to welcome others well in Jesus' name.

In many ways my new-neighbor welcome will look familiar: probably a houseplant and invitation to dinner. But beneath this runs so much more. In Christ my welcome is undergirded by God's value of these new people, that what happens between us matters, and that God will grow the friendships. This is the business of God's Kingdom at work, and it is an exciting business to be in.

BOOK REVIEW

Are you ready to dig deeper into the world of missional living?



Why not look into the workbook *Missional Essentials* by Lance Ford and Brad Brisco.

This study has been described as a 'response to Jesus'

commandment for us to love God with our all in all. Luke 10:27' (Amazon.com).

You are challenged to use this guide for experiencing God's mission in your life as an individual or as a group. It includes practical action steps for mobilizing your small group or yourself. Lessons 9-10 reinforce this year's NAB Women's Ministry theme (Who's My Neighbor?). 'Like a Good Neighbor' and 'Mi Casa ES Su Casa' explore the themes of knowing and loving your neighborhood and facilitating Biblical hospitality.

You are invited to spend time discovering the concepts of the missional movement in a clear, comprehensive and transferable format.



Come with us to Rosarito on our second Vision Trip

The Women's Ministry Leadership Team (WMLT) has formed a Sister Partnership with Rebeca/Gonzalo Gonzalez and the Iglesia Biblica Misionera.



A second team of women will be going to Rosarito, Mexico Sept. 15-19, 2016.

The purpose of the trip will be to continue developing the relationship between the WMLT and Rebeca/Gonzalo

and developing plans for bringing teams of women to Rosarito to minister to the women of that area.

There are still two places left on the team. Perhaps God is calling you to help create a vision for our partnership. Contact Jean Ewing jehewing@roadrunner.com for information.

Check out our vision trip information and schedule www.nabconference.org/ministries/womens-ministry

News from Rosarito, Mexico Our sister partnership

My mom (Rebeca) and I began planning another event for the women we come in contact with at the gym and at our church (Iglesia Biblica Misionera). We had invited around thirty women. Eighteen confirmed and eleven actually came. This didn't discourage us. God sent some new women who were invited to the dinner by someone else in the group. As we all sat down at the table the women began to interact with each other, and soon everyone felt comfortable.

Luisa Robinson, from Oregon, gave her talk and we could see that the women were touched by her testimony. Some of the women believed that as Christians we don't know any trials or have problems. It was easier for them to open up and for us to reach them once they found out that we too face daily struggles and that we understand that, as women, we need a friend and someone we can trust. The whole theme was about pain: how to struggle with it and heal the wounds of our hearts.

We spent time praying with these women. Our goal was to have them join the "circle" and be willing to share their

lives with us so we could introduce God into their lives. And they were willing to share. We cried together. We made it clear that God is interested in them, that He loves them, and that He wishes to give them salvation and be a part of their lives as their Heavenly Father. This truth changed their faces. We believe that beginning to know Him will begin to change their lives as well.

Now my mom is discipling four of these women, and we will have coffee with another one, to catch up with her. Hopefully she will be ready to join our discipling session.

God is opening doors for us to help the women around us and we thank Him for that.

God's richest blessings to you.

Rebeca Gonzalez and Gris Hernandez
(Rebeca's daughter)





Welcome...to the Community

Brad and Colleen Reid are pastoring Zion Baptist Church in Terrace, BC, a small town in the middle of the province. Here is Colleen's own story of their way of reaching out to welcome their community.



BY HEATHER SENGES

When Brad and I moved to Terrace we had a clear vision for community, for relationship, and for connection. This can look different for everybody. For an extrovert like Brad, this looks like parties and potlucks. For an introvert like me it looks like coffee out or a playdate for the kids where the moms can chat about anything other than Legos and Barbies. We had this vision for ourselves as a family moving into a new city, but we also had this vision for our church, Zion Baptist. This fell in line nicely with their mission statement:

"Zion is a Christ-centered family who reaches people for Jesus, encourages growth, and shows His love through action."

What better way to accomplish this than through relationship? We need to reach out to our neighbors, our friends, our co-workers, and our families. We need to show them Jesus' love in action. With that sentence tucked under our arms, we jumped off the diving board into the deep end of a new ministry. This was a ministry we felt strongly about, affectionately



Colleen and Brad Reid

called Missional Community, and we cheered this new ministry with every flip and twist. Only, those first few months were more of a belly flop than a 9.5 execution. We took a step back, took a deep breath, reviewed the situation, and came to realize that the community we needed to reach was our own church, not Terrace.

Sometimes we need to give ourselves a boost before we can boost those around us. It's like that moment when we are on a plane readying for takeoff and the flight attendant reminds us that if we lose cabin pressure and the oxygen masks are deployed, we need to secure our own mask before placing one on our neighbor. With this reminder we have spent the last several months building into

relationship with each other.

As the months have gone on we have felt the push to go forth with our missional mindset. As a group we have supported a local charity that feeds supper to the homeless in Terrace once a week. We have a weekly Bible study but break once a month for a potluck and invite anyone else to come along.

Individually we have encouraged each other to reach out to co-workers and neighbors, to pray for those we struggle with and love them as Christ loves. These are challenging tasks and can make the idea of being missional a little too daunting. This is what missional community looks like for our group. It is what has arisen out of our collective personalities and gifts. Every group will look different and will likely have a different way to connect and serve their community. This is not a quick fix ministry; it is an investment, it is building relationships using Christ as the cornerstone. We had to be intentional about praying specifically for how we can relate to our neighbors—how we can serve them, how we can love them.

We can't take credit for this. It is not an idea we can up with ourselves. Jesus told us to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind . . . Love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37, 39b)