



e-Java Moments

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

July/August 2015

SHARE A CUP WITH JEAN...

NAB Women's Ministry, Gateway Teams, and Rebeca Gonzalez Announce Sister Partnership

BY JEAN EWING



I have often reflected on the words of Henry Blackaby when I consider what it means to be on mission with God. "As God's obedient child, you are in

a love relationship with Him. He loves you and wants to involve you in His work. When He is ready, He will show you where He is working so you can join Him." (Henry Blackaby, Experiencing God, p. 74)

God is constantly at work to bring our world to Himself. When we accept His



Gonzalo and Rebeca Gonzalez



invitation to be involved in what He is doing, He completes His work through us.

The Women's Ministry Leadership Team has long felt the tug of God to seek ways of involving the women of the North American Baptist Conference in a long-term, mutual partnership with a sister ministry. We dreamed of having teams of women going on mission trips to a specific location in partnership with a specific ministry. In 2014 our team began communicating with Shelly Schmor of Gateway Teams to explore the possibility of such a relationship. Our desire was to partner with someone in North America so that travel expenses would be minimal and participating women would not have long distances to travel.

Shelly was excited to connect us with Rebeca Gonzalez. Rebeca and her husband Gonzalo are church planters in Rosarito, Mexico, which is about 20 minutes south of Tijuana in Baja

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Rebeca's Story

My name is Rebeca and I am happily married to Gonzalo. This summer, June 22nd, we will celebrated our 31st wedding anniversary! We have three daughters who are 15, 19, and 26 years of age and an only son who is 29 years old. When my oldest daughter and son were kids, I was a victim of domestic violence by my current husband.

I remember praying for my husband through the years in my own way, even though I wasn't Christian or a believer. In the year of 2000, just when I had no hope of overcoming the darkness I lived in, a trial forced us to move to Beaverton, Oregon. This is when God answered my prayers as He used this obstacle to give us pure joy, one that we had never experienced before.

After that encounter with God I couldn't believe my eyes as I surveyed a new heart and restored marriage. The impossible was now possible as my husband was

transformed and devoted to God. It was a painful process but today we can say that God changes lives and our family is a living testimony of His transforming power.

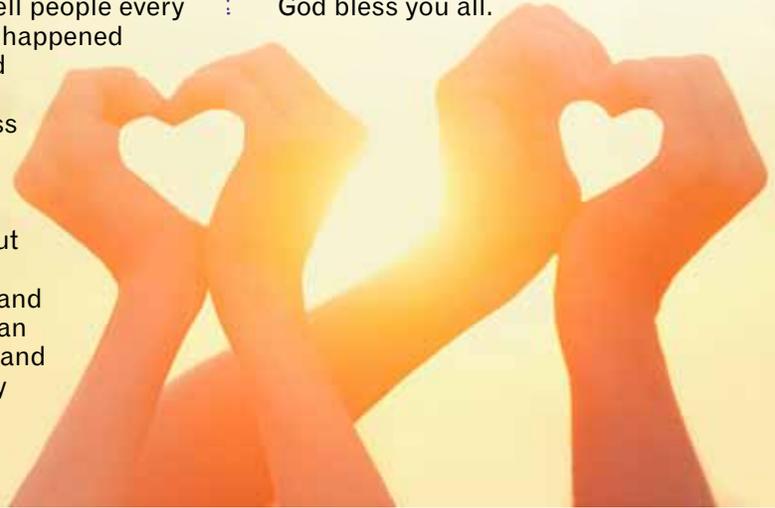
In 2005 we returned to Mexico to the city of Tepic. God allowed us to plant a church during the six years we lived there. Then in 2011 God called us to Rosarito, in Baja, and we are currently planting another church here.

This is what we tell people every time they ask what happened to our marriage and why our hearts are filled with happiness and peace. Christ is our reason! I now tell all the women I know about the sacrifice Jesus made on the cross and thanks to that we can reconcile with God and be free from sin. My husband repented

of his sin and I forgave him too. Ever since that day, God causes us to cross paths with women who went through the same situation and this is where I shout out my testimony and everything the Lord has done in our lives.

As a woman, the biggest wish of my heart is to impact my community and share the love and hope Christ offers with every woman and family. This is our ministry.

God bless you all.



Share a Cup

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California Norte just across the border from San Diego, California. Rebeca's wish to "impact her community by sharing the love and hope Christ offers with every woman and family" captured our attention.

After spending time in discussion and prayer, our team agreed to go on a vision trip to Rosarito to meet Rebeca, Gonzalo, and their three daughters. What a delightful time we had from October 2-7 as Jan Koger, Heather Senges, and I traveled with Randy and Shelly across the Mexican border and spent time sharing life stories, being in the Gonzalez home, touring the area where the Gonzalezes minister, and



From left, Jan, Shelly, Heather and Jean

sharing vision and ministry dreams. As we shared time together we felt the Spirit drawing our hearts closer to Himself and to each other. Rebeca's love for God and love for the women of Rosarito captured our hearts.

The WMLT is convinced that God has issued an invitation for us to join Him on mission in Rosarito. We are thrilled to announce the beginning of a long-term, mutual

partnership with Rebeca, Gonzalo, and their ministry through Iglesia Biblica Misionera. We look forward to how God will use Rebeca to grow our own faith and ministry.

Rebeca and her married daughter, Gris, will be a part of Women's Ministry events at the Triennial July 1-5 in Sacramento.

We look forward to how God will complete the work He has begun among the women of Rosarito. Opportunities for next steps in our journey will evolve through a joint vision of Gateway Teams, NAB's Women's Ministry, and Rebeca and Gonzalo Gonzalez. Please pray that God would clearly show us what is in His plan for our ministry together.

GRANDE! God at Work...

BY AMBER DOWD



I really admire Rebeca's heart and can relate to her desire to see her community lifted up by the life and transformation

that only Jesus can bring. I love how her life story, with its brokenness and triumph, has blessed others who can relate to what she has been through. So often God uses what He has redeemed to bless those who have not yet known the joy of His transformation. Maybe you've known this to be true in your own story and life of ministry.

I'm struck by the fact that, as followers of Christ across the world, we can experience a shared fundamental desire and calling to love others in Jesus' name, all the while having a unique story and cultural context through which to share our faith. This is the nature of the Kingdom of God. It is wholly transcendent across time and culture and can be infinitely tailored to every heart and location on earth. As we live for the legacy of Christ, we enjoy the role of communicating the grand story of God while also making room for the Spirit to work intimately in the lives and hearts of the people God brings our way.

But sometimes we can lose sight of this beautiful design. As our daily lives are ordered

around familiar places and faces, complacency naturally sets in. Things are ordinary, people are average, and we blend in and lose sight of the shaping lines of faith. We fail to see divine realities and recognize that God loves our neighbors desperately. Considering the opportunity to partner with the Gonzalez family prompts me to reflect upon the power that crossing cultures can have to resist this tendency. When we step away from our local context for a while and take time to experience what God is doing in another place, our hearts and perspective of God's Kingdom at work expands. This in turn hopefully expands our life and ministry at home and broadens relationships that bring strength, encouragement, and perspective to our walk with Christ.

So maybe you, like me, will be prompted to pray and ask God what it could look like to step away from the "familiar" and cross a boundary to witness God at work in another context. What could God do with this experience? How would God challenge you? Do you think you'd be the same? We, the Women's Ministry Leadership Team, invite you to join us in this journey of growth and discipleship as we endeavor into God's mission together.

A GOOD READ

Mitford Series by Jan Karon



BY JAN KOGER

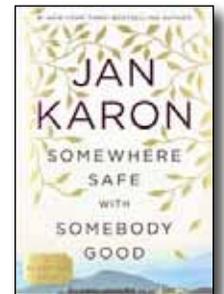
"We must be ready to allow ourselves to be interrupted by God,"

is a direct quote from Dietrich Bonhoeffer found on page 154 in my copy of Jan Karon's latest novel, *Somewhere Safe With Somebody Good*.

Ready for a good fiction series? If you haven't read the Mitford Series by Ms. Karon, you have missed a real treat. SWSWG is the latest in a long line of excellently written books (nine to be exact). Prepare yourself to fall in love with Mitford's down-to-earth citizens and especially the main character, Father Tim. Father Tim has his faults, doubts, and misgivings (life's interruptions, shall we say?), and because of them you just HAVE to love him. In the early books Father Tim deals with diabetes, self-doubt, and an empty house All three, and other unexpected circumstances, interrupt Father Tim's life.

These books are excellent beach reads, house-bound reads, and on-the-go reads.

If, by some stretch of the imagination, you have never heard of the Mitford Series by Jan Karon, I do suggest you start with her first book in the series, *At Home In Mitford*, and read the books in order. You will follow the storyline much better.



Check out our facebook page. See pics of WM luncheon.

CONNECT
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North American
Baptist Conference

1219 Pleasant Grove Blvd.
Roseville, CA 95678



wm.nabc@gmail.com
www.nabconference.org