



# e-Java Moments

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

March/April 2016

## SHARE A CUP WITH JEAN...



## 2016 Women's Ministry Theme Who's My Neighbor?

The articles in this issue are based on the first 3 chapters of Amy Lively's book 'How to Love Your Neighbor ...without being weird'



BY JEAN EWING,  
TEAM LEADER  
Williamsville,  
New York

In the last month I have committed myself to connecting with the neighbors who surround me in our 55-and-older community. I greet people by the mailboxes and as I ride the bike in the fitness center. As my next-door neighbor peeks his head out the door to get his paper or the woman who lives upstairs drives out of her garage we exchange smiles and waves. Connecting with my neighbors has been a challenge with snow on the ground and the temperature at or below freezing.

About a week ago I found a new way to meet a neighbor. I had just completed my morning walk and was anxiously thinking of the warm cup of coffee waiting for me in our apartment. I moved over to the side of the road to let a slow-moving car pass, extending my arm in a friendly wave. Little did I know that underneath that innocent-looking patch of snow I stepped on was a deadly patch of ice. I fell flat on my back (I was thankful for the four layers of clothes I had on). The driver stopped and offered to help me up. She insisted I recover by sitting in her car until I was warm. That's when I met Mary. As I sat trying to clear my head, she shared about the struggle she was having with the need to relocate to a less expensive apartment and about the health issues she was going through. I asked if I could pray with her and then promised to continue praying.

Later that day I reread chapter 1 of Amy Lively's book

*How to Love Your Neighbor Without Being Weird* and went to her website ([www.howtoloveyourneighbor.com](http://www.howtoloveyourneighbor.com)) to look at the Participant's Guide that she and Sara Edwards have developed to give direction and depth to the study. Amy and Sara urged me to begin to love my neighbors by praying for them. I had committed to praying for Mary. Why not for the rest of my community?

I found a few resources to help me. The website Pray for Every Home ([www.pray4everyhome.com](http://www.pray4everyhome.com)) provided a free, detailed neighborhood map with the names and addresses of my 100 closest neighbors. I also found a pretty, printable prayer guide at [www.howtoloveyourneighbor.com/pray](http://www.howtoloveyourneighbor.com/pray).

"God wants to open the door and let you in on what He is up to in your neighborhood! He has a plan, He is already at work, but we have to decide if we want to be involved or not. Prayer won't change God's heart toward your neighbors (He's already crazy about them!), but it will change you."

Amy Lively, *How to Love Your Neighbor Without Being Weird Participant's Guide*, page 8

Paul calls us to "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains."

— Colossians 4:2–3

I am praying that just as I took an unexpected opportunity to meet Mary, I would take opportunities to meet the rest of the neighbors in my community. And until I meet them face to face I will pray for them.

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# pray meet talk

## How One Saskatchewan Couple Got to Know Their Neighbors



BY HEATHER SENGES

God tells us to love our neighbors. Marlene Solberg explains how she and her husband Ken are loving the neighbors in their community.

We moved into our present neighborhood about five years ago. We have been trying to get to know our neighbors, but the street front is a wall of garage doors opened with remotes and closed behind each car. From October to March (remember this is Saskatchewan!) we would only see people when all were out shoveling snow or walking to our mailboxes. If we were going to get to know our neighbors, we needed to be proactive.

And so we tried, not using our busy schedules as excuses. We started out simply lending tools or giving neighbors a hand when they only had a snow shovel and we had a snow blower. After taking these baby steps, it was time to take a risk. We know God loves it when we do—it means we have to depend on Him!

So in December of 2014 we went door to door with invitations to a Christmas open house in our home. Some of our neighbors received the invitation with little emotion, while others were enthusiastic. But our responsibility was only to give the invitations. God would take care of the rest. That first Christmas about eighteen people came. We served appetizers and baked goods. We didn't know how much food to prepare, but the neighbors who attended were glad to take the leftovers home. We had a great time getting to know people who were longing for community in a disjointed world.

The following summer we planned a neighborhood barbeque.



We provided burgers, hot dogs, drinks, and sundaes, and our neighbors brought salads. We had 22 people come, and others said they couldn't make it this time but would love to come next time. Now we can put names to faces and we know stories about our neighbors' lives.

We have no idea where God will take this, but we had our second Christmas open house in 2015 with 24 people. We are now at a point where some of our neighbors are sharing their personal struggles with us and we are able to pray with them and for them. We are now looking for ideas that will bring us to the ultimate goal of being able to share Christ with them. These are now our friends, whom we have come to love, and we want them to come to know our Lord as well.

God calls us to be like the Israelites and take that first step into the water while God dries and prepares the land before us. We are excited to see what God will do in the coming months and years. It's challenging and exciting to be on mission with God!



## A Tale of Many Meetings



BY AMBER DOWD

There's a family that has lived on our street for about two years. When they first moved in I walked over and met the mom, Jenn. A while later we re-met when her kids visited my kids' lemonade stand. And we met a third time last fall at a barbeque. Each time it seemed like she had never seen me before in her life.

Although our kids go to the same school, our paths don't cross very often. So I was pleased the other day when I noticed she was parked next to me. As we got out of our cars to walk toward the school, I geared up to say hello. However as our gazes met she looked at me blankly, turned, and briskly walked away. She seemed to have no idea who I was.

Various thoughts ran through my mind in that moment. On one hand, I found it amusing. I guess three meetings weren't quite enough! On the other hand, I felt tempted to be offended. Was I

really that forgettable? I settled on just letting it go. I'm sure I've done the same thing to others without knowing it. Plus there's no doubt that we'll have yet another chance to "meet" soon.

But clearly something in our meeting process hasn't worked. And I think it touches on what Amy Lively is teaching us with regard to meeting and engaging our neighbors. She writes, "it's pretty hard to love someone when you don't even know their name." Thankfully I do know Jenn's name. But now I'm challenged with getting her to remember mine. This leads to a second point Amy makes, which is that "people remember being remembered." This might be where the breakdown is happening between Jenn and me, and I think the solution will come by graciously reminding Jenn that I remember her and not giving up.

Since God has placed me in my neighborhood, I can trust that he will guide the process of my relationship with Jenn. When I next "meet" Jenn I can remember several things about her. She's a nurse who works nights. She has an active set of twins. (Hmmm . . . maybe that's why she's spacy?) She also has creative flair. Keeping these things in mind reveals ways in which I can care for her and invite her to know me in turn. Making a point to initiate caring and meaningful conversation can create the connection we need to start building a memorable friendship.

## Let's Talk!



# Talk

BY FABIOLA CAMPOS

*"Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."*

Colossians 4:6

Talking has never been an issue for me. I can talk about almost any subject for hours! I am able to strike up a conversation with a stranger without a problem and I can easily approach people and talk to them as though I've known them for years. God gave me an outgoing personality, which has often been a blessing. Over the years I have learned to take advantage of my personality in order to share my faith with others. Here are two principles that have helped me improve my conversations.

Do less talking and more listening.

The Bible tells us that "everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak" (James 1:19). Is this the reason we have two ears but only one mouth? I notice people feel a lot more comfortable with you when you let them do most of the talking. It's amazing what important things you can learn about a person by listening to her stories, struggles, and interests. Listening gives us the opportunity to engage others in a spiritual conversation and to pray for them more effectively.

Use the right words with the right attitude.

Have you ever said something to someone thinking it will be appreciated, but instead you get a negative reaction? You meant to give encouragement but your words were taken as criticism; you tried to exhort in love but your words were interpreted as offensive and intrusive. The things we say as are important as how we say them. Paul's advice comes to mind: "Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt" (Colossians 4:6). Grace is the outpouring of Jesus' character through us, and our words need to be seasoned with the underserved gift of grace. I have great admiration for those who know when and how to talk. God knows how much I have learned from them and how encouraged I have been by their "grace and salt."

We have the blessing of being able to communicate with God and man through words. Good conversations can be effective tools, but bad conversations can cause heartache. We must learn to listen before we talk and then learn to talk with grace.

## Thank You to the Women of the NAB From:



On behalf of the First Gift Ministry of Bethany Baptist Church, we would like to thank all who contributed to the generous donation we received. Your

support has been valuable and encouraging in so many ways. We feel so blessed to have received this support.

We are thankful to continue to care for the special women and their babies at B.C. Women's Hospital Fir Ward as they make a fresh start.

Gratefully yours!

Trina and Temi Ojo, Janet Kriese, Nancy Piva, and Tonia Hinz

## Feed the Children of Guatemala Christmas Project 2014

*Pastor Edgar and Sandra of The Potter's House, Montreal, Quebec, share these thoughts with you in gratitude for the offering you gave, assuring you that the message of hope was given to those who received "Bolsas de Bendición," or blessing bags.*



"The trip was made to the city of Mazatenango, Suchitepequez Guatemala from December 1-17, 2015. The NAB Women's Ministry and the Potter's House financed the project. Each child received a blue backpack with the logo of Ministerios Cielos Abiertos Guatemala (Open Heaven Ministries). Children attending school received a backpack containing basic school supplies. Those not attending school were given a bag with basic clothing items.

A total of 200 blessing bags were given to children and 200 bags of food were distributed to their families. In addition, a special lunch was provided and each pastor and his family at each of the five churches received a love offering of \$100. Your \$4,900 offering was used to the glory and honor of God.

We launched a campaign to encourage people to donate a gift to a family in need. Our commitment is to leave a legacy of hope and promise to future generations. We want to strengthen, develop, and renew poor Christian congregations and communities, working with mission partners to help develop spiritual life, worship, witness, and service.

Thank you to all who gave to this project out of love for the children and families who live under such harsh conditions."



# FLAVORINGS

Women shared the following women's ministry ideas at our Triennial luncheon.

## Colonial Village Baptist

Lansing, Michigan

*Our ladies work closely with Child Evangelism Fellowship making small prizes, tic-tac-toe foam games, pens with flowers on them, wordless books, and angel necklaces for kids who come to 5-Day Clubs. Every prize has a verse on it. We sponsor the Noah's Ark at the county fairs. Our ministry partners tell us when kids are saved.*

– Edith Schroeder

## Rowendale Baptist

Winnipeg, Manitoba

*Our ladies' ministry hosts an evening four times a year with wonderful dessert, a motivational speaker, and a clear message of the gospel. Our Christmas event is so popular that we've expanded it to two evenings with approximately 300 women attending.*

– Rita Schroeder

*We have a group on Facebook for young moms who want to love Jesus in their marriages and parenting. They share prayer requests and ask each other questions. I meet weekly with group members who can attend for Bible study and prayer (with kids). Young moms share together. This meets many needs.*

– Jessica Seck Marquis

## NEW WOMEN'S MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TEAM MEMBER



### Dale Fast Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dale Fast has been involved in women's ministry for many years as a participant, co-leader, committee leader, and a leader. "There has never been a time in my adult life when I have

not focused on women's ministry, whether it be in prayer, leading Bible studies, or preparing a women's retreat." Dale has also been involved in Navigator's 2:7 Series, small groups, church choir, Awana, and Sunday school and has served as a youth leader, mentor, and deacon.

She recently retired from the public school system where she was an educational assistant for seventeen years in her community school in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

"To be honest, serving on the WMLT was not on my radar. However, once I began to consider and pray about possibly joining, I felt excited and directed by God to accept the position." Dale is a team player and believes in supporting the endeavors of others.

Dale and her husband Bob have two married daughters and two granddaughters. She was raised in a Christian home and accepted Christ as her Savior as a very young child. Dale was baptized at age 10. She and Bob have been members of Whyte Ridge Baptist Church in Winnipeg for their entire married life.

"I love the Lord with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength. He leads and guides me daily through His word and in prayer. The verse that I shared at our daughter's wedding expresses the attitude of my heart. Psalm 13:6 says, "I will sing the Lord's praise, for He has been good to me."

Welcome to the team, Dale!

## Japan Komyo Christian Church Workers (Home Assignment support)

A couple with pastoral experience, strong leadership ability and a heart for cross cultural ministry is needed to serve at the Komyo Christian Church while Paul and Melissa Ewing are on home assignment.

Term is from July, 2016 to September, 2017.

Japanese ability is preferred but not a requirement. While coming with children is acceptable, having a child during this term is strongly discouraged.

For more information:

**Japan Field Director**  
Paul Ewing  
pemedicus@yahoo.com

**International office**  
Norm Poehlke  
916-797-6222, ext 227  
npoehlke@nabconf.org