

## SHARE A CUP WITH JEAN...

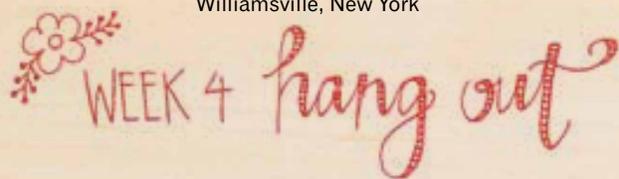


2016 Women's Ministry Theme

# Who's My Neighbor?

The articles in this issue are based on chapters 4, 5, and 6 of Amy Lively's book *How to Love Your Neighbor Without Being Weird* where Amy challenges us to hang out with, eat with and serve with our neighbors.

BY JEAN EWING, TEAM LEADER  
Williamsville, New York



**D**id you know that hanging out with your neighbors can relieve stress, stimulate the mind, boost creativity, help you see problems in a new way, and heal emotional wounds? These are among the fifteen benefits found on [www.Helpguide.org](http://www.Helpguide.org) to spending time or hanging out with your neighbors.

One of my favorite verses is John 1:14 (the Message):  
"The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood."

Jesus left the security of heaven and literally pitched His tent among us and began hanging out. He ate in the homes of sinners, served meals to thousands, had deep conversations at the synagogues, toured the hillsides with friends, ate with many in their kitchens, and welcomed children. He never stopped hanging out! It was all about establishing relationships.

God shares His ideal vision of community in Zechariah 8:4-5: "Old men and old women will come back to Jerusalem,

sit on benches on the streets and spin tales, move around safely with their canes—a good city to grow old in. And boys and girls will fill the public parks, laughing and playing—a good city to grow up in."

By knowing our neighbors we provide a safety net for both old and young. Amy lists 45 ways to get out of the house and hang out with your neighbors. I found five I could do in my 55-and-older community:

- Plan an evening of board games
- Take an exercise class
- Watch a play
- Enjoy an art exhibit
- Take a walk

Amy shares: "Not sure how to reach your neighbors with the love of Jesus? Hang out with them. Laugh with your neighbors. Celebrate with your neighbors. It is, quite literally, the answer to the question, 'What would Jesus do?'" (Participant's Guide found at [www.howtoloveyourneighbor.com](http://www.howtoloveyourneighbor.com), page 21). As we get to know our neighbors God will handle the spiritual stuff for us. His gentle whisper, with the right words to say, will guide us when the time is right to share about His goodness.

Find more information about hanging out with your neighbors by going to the downloadable study guides on Amy's website.

## CONTENTS

2	Eat	3	Flavorings
2	NBS2GO!	3	Eastern Association Women's Retreat
2	Serve	4	Thank you notes
3	Hang out ... eat		

eat

## Join Me at the Table



BY FABIOLA CAMPOS

Eating is so good, but eating alone? Not so much. Have you ever eaten by yourself? I have, and let me tell you, food is not the same; it is tasteless. Even if you are having a fancy meal, without company food tastes like cardboard.

To me, the best part about eating is the company. I could write so much about the good times I've had with family and friends when we sit at the table sharing a meal. The best conversations that my husband and I have ever had with our kids have been at the dinner table, even the most serious ones. Sometimes we forget about the food, and they forget about my awful cooking. I love how they even compliment me! We always have such a great time together at the table.

I came to realize this is a good way to get to know my neighbors better. I invite them over to my house to have dinner. There is something special about that, but it is not always easy because many times I am fearful and make excuses: my house is too small, I don't have the time to cook

a decent meal, they might not like my cooking, or they might have food allergies. Sounds familiar? I had to get rid of my excuses and overcome my fears, and I encourage you to do the same, because in the end people do not care about any of that. Trust me, if they don't like your cooking or they don't feel like eating your food, they are not going to eat it and they will be polite about it (How many times have we done that?).

But they will appreciate your interest in wanting to spend quality time with them. It provides you with the opportunity to get to know them better, to listen to their story, and to share God's story as well. And that should always be our goal: For Him to be known.

The bible includes stories where Jesus made the time to be with other people. Whether he was with his disciples or with the ones called sinners, it's amazing to see how some of the best demonstrations of love and repentance, the best life lessons, and the most touching acts of compassion were shown in the moments when Jesus gathered with others at the table. I hope and pray that as we make the time to share a meal, or maybe just a cup of tea, people will encounter Him in a deeper and maybe in a new way.



## Neighborhood Bible Studies are changing lives!

NBS2GO is simply the packaging of all the ideas, resources and inspiration of the NBS movement so that women everywhere feel encouraged and equipped to launch their own groups.

serve



BY AMBER DOWD

My new neighbors two houses down have put a bench in their front yard. I can hardly wait for summer to come so we can sit on the bench and talk and watch the children play. It will be bring-your-own-coffee, but still so much fun to hang out and eat with them!

I overheard two women greeting each other on a bench in front of me during my daughter's gymnastics class. They exchanged a cheery "Shalom!" and then visited in Hebrew. The word "shalom" hit my ears like music. I didn't know it was used for casual greetings and I found myself wishing I could commonly use it, too.

Shalom is a special word. We've all likely heard it and studied it to some degree. More than just "hello," shalom intends a message of wholeness or completeness. It expresses balance and flourishing. When used to say hello or goodbye, you're essentially placing a blessing of shalom upon the other person.

If I take this word to heart, shalom can be like a pair of prescription glasses for my soul, with lenses that encourage me to see things for what they can or should be. If I see my neighbor through shalom lenses, my vision shifts and God's best interest for my neighbor becomes my best interest, taking the place of my typically selfish and careless interests.

With this vision applied to my neighborhood, my missional wheels naturally start turning. My neighbors and I are a pretty

self-sufficient lot, and our self-sufficiency preys against shalom. We bop along day by day detached from others and more importantly, from God. Our hearts remain mysterious to each other and we do little to collectively "move the needle" in our world (as Reggie McNeal encouraged us to do at Triennial). I'm asking God to change this, and one idea that comes to mind is to invite my neighbors to join in on an act of service beyond our street.

So here's an idea that has been placed on my heart. I'll organize a field trip for my neighbors and their kids to a local farm that reserves a portion of its crops for food banks. Volunteers are invited to glean and box the donated produce, so we'll do that together. "Glean" will likely be a new vocabulary word for some of my friends, so over a picnic lunch I'll explain gleaning from the book of Ruth and hopefully draw us nearer to God's message of shalom.

I have three hopes for this: that it'll open our eyes to the needs in our community, open our lives more meaningfully to one another, and most importantly proclaim shalom, which is the Gospel. I admit this makes me nervous. It forces me to step way out, taking on leadership with my beliefs on the forefront. But I trust that this will draw us closer to God's beautiful and adventurous truth. Along with this I hope that God gives vision to you, that you will see your community through the lenses of shalom, and that creative ideas for service and engagement, relevant to your people and your place, will come flooding to mind. Oh, and I'll keep you posted on how the field trip goes! Shalom!

# Hang Out ... Eat

How these women chose to hang out with and eat with their neighbors



BY HEATHER SENGES

**"**Come for lunch." ... "First we'll have coffee." ... "We'd like to invite you for dinner." How much we all enjoy hearing these words! An invitation to hang out and eat together warms our hearts and brings joy to our souls—and bodies!

When Nancy and her family moved into a new neighborhood with just sixteen houses on the cul-de-sac, they wanted to get to know their neighbors. So they planned a summer barbeque for all the people on the street—out in the middle of the street! She printed up an invitation and they delivered it to each house. Nancy's family would provide the burgers and drinks. The others were invited to bring salads and desserts. That first barbeque was a huge success! So each summer, they hold another one—out in the street, with burgers and salads and sweets. All the neighbors come. In fact, the neighbors have started asking when it will be held so they can plan their summer activities around it! These first meetings have turned into opportunities to talk much more with these neighbors.

Marion and her husband downsized into an apartment after many years in their own house. No front yard, no front door. How could they meet their neighbors in a high rise apartment block? Well, they didn't wait to be introduced. Marion went to every suite on their floor—six of them all told—and invited all their neighbors to dinner at her place one evening. They all came, and thus Marion met all her neighbors. Since then, they have met the people above them as well. And, knowing these people they live next to, they have also come to know their needs and have been able to help in many situations.

Has your neighborhood ever held a Street Party? It is a great way to meet the people next to you—hang out and eat! It is amazing who you meet at these parties.



## Is there a group in your church that is reading 'How to Love your Neighbor?'

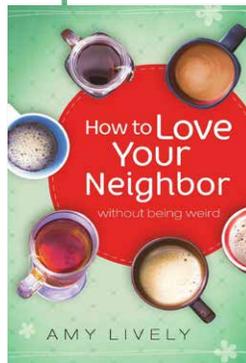


**Pittsford Community Church (Pittsford, New York) Uses Facebook to Study How to Love Your Neighbor**

Sherry Sabo, chairwoman of Amazing Grace Women's Ministries, has invited all the women of Pittsford Community Church to read one chapter of How to Love Your Neighbor each month. Those who are participating then share their thoughts and how they are being led to love their neighbors on a closed Facebook page.

**How are you studying and using our theme book this year? We would like to share your story. Contact [jhewing@roadrunner.com](mailto:jhewing@roadrunner.com)**

## 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](mailto: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"...*

## Eastern Association Women's Retreat CELEBRATING 50 YEARS...

### Hope in the midst of struggle



**June 10-12, 2016  
Guelph Bible  
Conference Grounds  
Guelph, Ontario**

Gayle Fangrad, Eastern Association Women's Ministries, "In 2016 we celebrate 50 years of Eastern Association women meeting together for an annual retreat. We invite you to be a part of this historic retreat."

Those attending will reminisce about past retreats and be encouraged by stories of God's working in lives of the women of the Eastern Association.



Youth Leaders from the United States and Canada gathered in Puerto Nuevo, Mexico for a time to refuel, reconnect and refocus. The Summit, sponsored by the NAB Youth Ministry Leadership Team, is designed to inspire leaders and their spouses to return to their ministry with "a new perspective, a fresh vision, and a fueled passion for serving students and their parents". The Women's Ministry Leadership Team partnered with the YMLT in providing scholarships for the wives of men in youth ministry to attend. Jud and Care Stade serve youth and parents at Central Baptist Church in Edmonton, Alberta.



Care was able to attend the Summit:

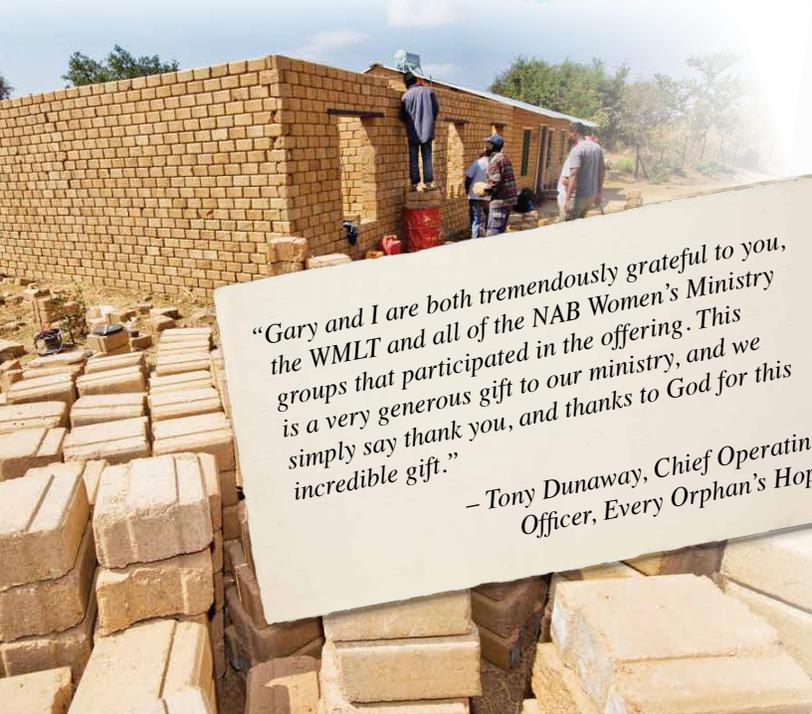
I recently had the opportunity to go with my husband Jud to the YMLT Summit in Puerto Nuevo, Mexico. Because of our journey with family health concerns in the past few months, this conference based on rest and renewal is something we were both very grateful for that we were able to attend together. For me it was the perfect mix of worship, sessions, meeting new friends and free time where I enjoyed spending time on my own to journal and to read my Bible.

One of the unique experiences of this conference is that it was in Baja, California where our family has spent a good amount of time in the past few years. This area is our home away from home.

I want to say a BIG thank you to the Women's Ministry Leadership Team who paved the way for me to attend the YMLT Summit with my husband. We both came away from the conference not only feeling rested and renewed, but also invested in by the North American Baptist Conference.

## OUR WOMEN'S MINISTRY 2015 CHRISTMAS PROJECT

Thank you from Every Orphan's Hope for showing your love and support for the Chicks for Orphans Initiative project



"Gary and I are both tremendously grateful to you, the WMLT and all of the NAB Women's Ministry groups that participated in the offering. This is a very generous gift to our ministry, and we simply say thank you, and thanks to God for this incredible gift."

- Tony Dunaway, Chief Operating Officer, Every Orphan's Hope

Dear NAB Friends,

I wanted to say thank you for your donation of \$10,223.93 for Chicks for Orphans.

We buy day-old chicks, raise them for six weeks on our poultry farm and sell them in the marketplace. Proceeds from the sale of our chicks benefit the orphans and widows we serve in Zambia.

Your thoughtful contribution encourages us to do God's work in Zambia. Thank you for walking alongside us as we follow James 1:27: "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

We appreciate you!

Sincerely in Christ,  
Gary Schneider  
Founder and President  
Every Orphan's Hope

