

Made For More

WESTWOOD BAPTIST WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Vision: A community of women passionately living for Jesus empowered by the Holy Spirit

Mission: Shepherding and equipping women to live transformed lives as followers of Jesus

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Fresh Beginning



What is it about a brand new box of crayons that excites children of all ages? The crisp box seals in the scent of the colored wax as it quickly escapes the moment the seal is broken. Each tip is perfectly cut to match its neighbor so that no single crayon stands out among the others. The vibrant colors immediately scream out endless possibilities. Oh, a new box of crayons is simply delightful and refreshing.

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We all love a new beginning. It's January and people all over the world anticipate a new year with brand new beginnings, equipped with strength and motivation to follow through all 365 days that stand before our very eyes. This is the year to shed those pounds, never to return to the place where we once stood, uncomfortable in our own skin. The year 2012 marks the beginning of the transformation of our bodies into the Olympic athlete we always dreamed of attaining. Finally, our spending will match up perfectly with the preplanned budget all laid out for us beginning January 1. We face our dreams in hopes that life is, once and for all, forever changed.

Whatever goals you're clinging to today, I say go for it! Having goals in life most definitely stretches us and grows us in unique ways. And may I wish you the very best of luck as you reach for that resolution! But may I challenge both you and myself in something far more important than absolutely anything this world has to offer?

Before we open the lovely, picture filled, healthy cookbook or reach for the additional five pound weight or crunch the numbers of our newly, conservative budget, may we first and foremost reach out for God's Holy Word, the Bible. It is my prayer that each one of us will make daily time for our God, placing Him number one on our priority list. Absolutely nothing else matters next to this precious, daily time with our heavenly Father! In the single chapter of Psalm 119, God promises a lengthy list of gifts we receive upon meditating on His Word. He assures to provide our lives with strength (119:11), truth (119:18, 160), encouragement (119:28), understanding (119:32), life (119:37), comfort (119:52), stability (119:61, 133),

"Turn my eyes from worthless things, and give me life through your word."

Psalm 119:37

Fresh Beginning (cont.)

wisdom (119:98), guidance (119:105), treasure (119:111, 162), joy (119:143-144) and peace (119:165). *Nothing else* in this world promises such an exhaustive list like this one!

Jeroboam became the king of Israel after Solomon's reign and ruled over 10 of the 12 tribes of Israel. As a result of his evil thinking, he told the people that it was "too much trouble for you to worship in Jerusalem" (1 Kings 12:28). He then proceeded to explain that "the gods" rescued them from Egypt and the Israelites followed his lying kingship. It may take extra effort, a little less sleep or timeout in our day, but is God really "too much trouble"? Do we value our calendar more than time in His Word? When we don't go the extra mile to learn and study God's Word, we, too, will be unable to distinguish the truth from lies. It is vital that we know His truth to withstand the challenges we face everyday.

So here it is, the month of January. We have a choice to make. Are we going to make our time with God of utmost of **importance...daily?** I pray that as we reach out for the beautiful book of truth, our hearts will be filled with excitement. When we open the pages may the aroma of the Holy Spirit fill our hearts and minds. May the colorful and historical events and teachings of Christ scream out possibilities of changed hearts and lives. May the Word of God be delightful and refreshing to our souls.

"Turn my eyes from worthless things, and give me life through your Word." (Psalm 119:37) ✪

✪ Beth Ann Graybeal
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The Story of Us Shared By: Amie Putnam



I am the woman who rides shotgun in the very large, very white, 15 passenger van. I do this not because it is fashionable to drive in two zip codes at one time, but out of necessity. My husband David and I have seven children. Six of those children we share a last name with and the other one is our foster baby. This is not the life I imagined or planned for; but I have learned in the not so **distant past, that God's plans are far different, and better, than our own.**

Jeremiah 29:11-13 says, **"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."**

My husband and I met on a Sunday afternoon 17 years ago at the Everett Public Library. It was a short, six month courtship, but I knew that this was the man I was

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Jeremiah 29:11-13

going to spend the rest of my life with. I grew up in a broken and abusive home, he grew up with loving, Christian parents. Although I had accepted Christ as my Savior when I was 15, I had turned away after being hurt by a spiritual mentor my senior year of high school. In spite of me, God stuck and David started picking me up for church each Sunday while we were dating. I am still amazed at how God orchestrated our meeting that January afternoon so long ago. I spent a year planning our large wedding and imagining how every one of my dreams and expectations would play out. Part of those plans included children. I loved kids and knew beyond a doubt that we would begin a family sooner rather than later. I should take a moment to mention that I am a self-confessed “plan-a-holic” I don’t do spontaneity and relish lists than can be checked off systematically. On our one year wedding anniversary I was newly pregnant and we were eagerly anticipating our baby. That was the first of two very complicated pregnancies that both ended with our newborn sons in the NICU. After our second son was born the doctor sat me down and told me that having another baby could endanger my life and that there was a high probability another baby might not survive.

We moved to Olympia in 2003 when my husband was promoted to Governor Locke’s security detail. It seemed like all of my new friends were enjoying babies and planning pregnancies. I desperately wanted another baby, a little girl to spoil and love. That dream was fading farther and farther away and seemed crushed forever when I had to undergo a hysterectomy at 33. We had gone through the process of becoming a licensed foster family in the hopes of me getting a baby fix; but after nearly a month we still hadn’t received a call. I literally had my phone with me every second of the day and would hold my breath each time it rang, just hoping and praying for a baby. I sunk into a desperate depression. I cannot recall a time where I have felt farther from God. I truly believed that God thought I was a horrible mother and He was taking away my ability to have children. My mind played over and over all the mistakes I had made as a young mother, and Satan taunted me with fears from my past until I was literally on the couch crying out in despair. A friend

wrote to me, her words touching me and inspiring some heartfelt prayers; I begged God for a sign that He had not forsaken me and the very next afternoon...I got one! Some may have called it a coincidence, but I saw God speaking through it, a simple crossing of paths, but it spoke volumes to me. That night as I lay in bed praying and thanking Him, I got bold and asked him to fulfill the desire of my heart, a daughter. The next morning the placement coordinator called asking if we would take in a 19 month old baby girl with the sweet name of Layla Faith. Layla was legally adopted by us two years later and just turned seven this past October. While she was our foster child, there was a very long legal battle for her. She suffered tremendously and battled borderline attachment disorder. To work on her trusting me, I would rock her each day. I would sing, tell her the story of ‘Layla and the Three Bears’, and say Jeremiah 29:11-13 over and over. Speaking those verses out loud every day branded them into my heart and hopefully, into hers. She heard them so many times that when she finished her first year of Cubbies, those were the verses she recited at the awards ceremony. Since then, God has also blessed us with Matthew (3), Claire (2), and Jeremiah (1). We also have had the privilege to parent 16 other babies in the past six years. Each of the babies we have had, we have loved. I can recall each of their names, when they were with us, their often tragic stories, and how heart breaking it was to tell them good-bye. Very few of them have been easy; but I feel blessed beyond measure that God has trusted these little ones to our care, giving me the opportunity to love and nurture a “quiver” full of children.

It is not a coincidence that our baby boy is named Jeremiah. Those beautiful verses have spoken to me, comforted me, and lifted me up many times in the past few years. They promise us that He has good things planned for each of us and that if we will simply seek Him; He is there to be found. I still make lists and plans, I still cringe at the idea of doing anything spontaneous, but I hope that I have come far enough to realize that no plan my heart conceives could come close to the greatness He has for me.

Monthly Gatherings

Midweek Life Groups

Tuesday mornings (every week in Jan. & Feb.)
Wednesday evenings (every week in Jan. & Feb.)

MOPS

Friday, January 20
Friday, February 3
Friday, February 24

Connections for Women Who Live Alone

Wednesday, February 1

Training Session

Ladies who are interested in learning the basics of mentoring

are invited to attend a time of training and sharing on **Sunday, January 29** at noon in room E2 at Westwood.

A light lunch will be provided so please let Deb Boyce know you are coming, 360-561-9777 or demobo@comcast.net by Thursday, January 26.

Ministry Opportunity

Women's Ministry is beginning a service ministry to Genesis Acres,

a women's transitional living facility which is a ministry of the Olympia Union Gospel Mission.

We are looking for two or three women of Westwood to spearhead this effort of support and encouragement to the facility residents. To find out what this would involve, contact **Kathy Pruitt, Director of Westwood's Women's Ministry** at 360.866.6888 or kathypruitt@westwoodbaptist.com.

Monthly Challenge

"So faith comes from hearing,

and hearing by the **word of Christ.**"

Romans 10:17 NASB

Please make time for Christ.

There is **nothing** more important!

Come to the Table... a favorite recipe

Dressed Up Tomato Soup

Ingredients

- 1 28-ounce can Italian-seasoned diced tomatoes
- 1 26-ounce can tomato soup, undiluted
- 1 32-ounce container chicken broth
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- Optional toppings: sour cream; chopped fresh parsley, basil, chives, or rosemary; croutons; freshly grated Parmesan cheese; grated lemon rind

Preparation

Pulse 1 (28-oz.) can Italian-seasoned diced tomatoes in a food processor 3 to 4 times or until finely diced. Stir together tomatoes; 1 (26-oz.) can tomato soup, undiluted; 1 (32-oz.) container chicken broth; and 1/2 tsp. freshly ground pepper in a Dutch oven. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, 10 minutes or until thoroughly heated.

To serve, we topped the soup with a dollop of sour cream and sprinkled it with chopped fresh parsley. Other tasty additions include chopped fresh basil, chopped fresh chives, chopped fresh rosemary, croutons, freshly grated Parmesan cheese, and grated lemon rind.

A Southern Living Recipe

"Without You"

Matt Hammitt

I don't want to waste another day, I don't want to wait another night.

To tell you everything that's on my mind.

Maybe I've said it all before, but this life is just too short

to miss the chance to tell you one more time.

There's no life without you. There's no life without you.

Life without you is incomplete like setting sail without a sea.

There's no life without you, Lord.

Looking for another movin' mountain or a dead man brought to life.

But I don't want to miss you when you're right before my eyes.

And I don't want to love you for a blessing; I just want to know who you are.

Cause you could never give me something better than your light in my heart.

There's no life without you. There's no life without you.

Life without you is incomplete like setting sail without a sea.

There's no life without you, Lord.

And all will be well with my soul when all I'm chasing is your love.

All will be well with my soul when all I'm chasing is your love.

There's no life without you. There's no life without you.

Life without you is incomplete like setting sail without a sea.

There's no life without you, Lord.