

# CAMT WELLSRING RESOURCES FOR WOMEN'S MINISTRY

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## THE DIFFERENT FACES OF WOMEN'S MINISTRY...

Many years ago my friend, Shirley Rowan, and I enjoyed great success with a women's class at Downtown church. We titled it "Young Wives and Mothers Class," unabashedly stealing the name from another area church's class. We met on Wednesday night, with circled-up chairs to promote informality and discussion. That class over the next two years scratched where these ladies were itching!

I was sure we held the secret to an effective women's class, and I felt pretty puffy about that. After a couple of years, our family moved to another town and new church because of my husband's job change. Soon after settling in, I confidently set out to prove my expertise in this women's class business. Piece of cake!

I initiated a mid-week study for young wives and moms. We had a roomful. Chairs arranged just so in a circle, my topics ready to be expounded upon – proceed! What a dismal failure!

Instead of friendly, open faces, poker expressions looked my way, waiting to see what was going to happen. I was nervous. I opened with the same material received so well by the previous group – but this time it went over like serving a fast-food burger to Martha Stewart. The class dissolved in record time.

I felt like an abject failure. As I licked my self-inflicted wounds, a profound truth dawned on me – *these were different women*. I could not package up my little formula for success and transpose it over to these sisters as though they were replicas of the first group. Indeed, it was an affront to them for me to try to do so.

Even though I know now I was not a failure, I also know I was not wise. I failed to consider the differences in the dynamics and needs of the two classes. For instance: those in the first group lived in a small college town and were stay-at-home moms. The second group of women were city-dwellers who held down

full-time jobs. Several in the second class were related, while hardly any in the first class had such ties.

Even the way they related to each other within each of the two groups was unique. Just as the diversity between churches is noteworthy, equally challenging are the distinctive traits of the women in those churches. One size definitely does not fit all.

My experience with those classes was a microcosm of working with various women's ministries. You cannot take the template of another church's successful women's ministry and superimpose it on the women of your church, expecting to reap the same results. A pattern or model suited to the wonderful women of your particular congregation must be created over time – with much prayer, wisdom, and power from God – a ministry that will enable God to move in and through his daughters for His purposes.

*Geraldine Woodell  
Searcy (Downtown)*

## UPCOMING LADIES EVENTS:

April 25, 2009  
"Showers of Blessings"  
Mayflower Church of Christ  
(Mayflower, AR)  
Speakers: Sharon Eppes, Dena Moore, and Nancy Tackett.



May 2, 2009  
"Learning and Discovering Your Best, Using God's Strength (LADYBUGS)"  
Somers Avenue Church of Christ  
(North Little Rock, AR)  
Guest Speaker: Rosemary Summers



September 27-30, 2009  
"Eternity in Our Hearts:  
Studies in Ecclesiastes"  
Lectureship 2009

Offering Ladies &  
Preacher's Wives Tracks  
On Monday & Wednesday  
September 28th & 30th  
On the Campus  
of Harding University

Women's Program  
On Tuesday, September 28th  
at the  
College Church of Christ



February 26-27, 2009  
WINGS 2010

Venue Change:  
Harding University Campus

For more information:  
wings@harding.edu



Submit your event to  
Wellspring@harding.edu

## BULLETIN BOARD

Wellspring is published ten times per year by the Center for Advanced Ministry Training at Harding University.

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“LAST YEAR WE HAD CHILDREN WHO WERE NOT AWARE THAT ‘JESUS’ WAS A PERSON:

THEY THOUGHT HE WAS A CURSE WORD.”

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“Grief Bags”  
Levy (North Little Rock, AR)

Whenever there is a death in the family, our women's ministry make a “grief bag.” It is a big bag of plastic tableware, both purse and box size Kleenex, hot and cold disposable cups, toilet paper, boxes of tea and coffee, paper plates and napkins. We try to think of things that we know the family will need during this time and provide them so that they do not have to worry about these little needs.

The families are so appreciative of this gift! One of

the members of this family said, “You can't believe how glad we were that someone thought of toilet paper.” During difficult times, it is the little thoughtful things we do that count.

The grief gift was out of the box when the women's ministries started it a few years ago. It came out of a class where a young woman spoke up and said, “Ya'll, our family received the most thoughtful gift when our \_\_\_\_\_ died.” As she described this idea, it caught on.

Originally we were putting these items into large

black trash bags, but we have been thinking about other cost-efficient solutions. Some that have been suggested are large bags with the women's ministry logo, dirty clothes baskets, and baskets from garage sales. We are trying out an army surplus bag now.

The ladies have enjoyed helping out by bringing items for the “grief bags.” Those who have trouble fitting in a trip to the store have even donated money so that someone else can purchase what is needed. This is a great involvement opportunity, especially when women are just stepping out and getting their feet wet in ministry.

*(Suzanne Dillard)*

## REACHING OUT

While recently attending WINGS and the Women's Ministry Conference, I was asked to share a unique outreach opportunity. My husband David and I own a water park on the outskirts of Little Rock. Willow Springs opened in 1928 and is a family oriented park that includes a shallow, chlorinated three-acre swimming area, outdoor games, picnic areas, and lots of fun. Many of our lifeguards are members from local congregations.

This will be the third year that we have sponsored a Bible Camp with our home congregation, Sandstone Drive for children ages 5

through 12. The camp will be the last week in June, Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Last year we accommodated over 100 children which is quite an undertaking for our small congregation.

We offer dramatic presentations, skits, stories, Bible lessons, crafts, two meals, snacks, and a great time. Every evening there is a speaker for the parents. Last year was Jimmy Allen and this year Sonny Childs.

We target children from shelters and lower income areas who would normally be unable to afford a camp. Last year we had children who

were not aware that ‘Jesus’ was a person: they thought He was a curse word.

Our hope is to expand to three camps throughout the summer, run by three different groups. We are always seeking assistance with camp and would welcome any help you might be able to offer. If your women or teens are looking for a way to share the love of Jesus to the underprivileged or would be interested in hosting your own camp please give us a call at 501-888-4148.

*Lou Ann Ratliff  
Sandstone Drive  
(Little Rock, AR)*