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# Regional Women's Circle Connection

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## REGIONAL WOMEN'S MINISTRY



### Fall Women's Retreat!! Woven Together in Love October 1-2, 2010



Keynote Speaker:  
Sandhya Jha

New Friends and long time friends getting together. Great workshops. Wonderful Worship . Handicrafts from 10,000 Villages. Mark you calendar to meet new friends and long time friends at Murray Hills Christian Church. Brochures available—call 503-226-7648.

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#### DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Regional Assembly, Portland First Christian, May 14-15, 2010
- Quadrennial, Greensboro, NC, June 23-27, 2010
- Play & Pray Days –dates on page 4.

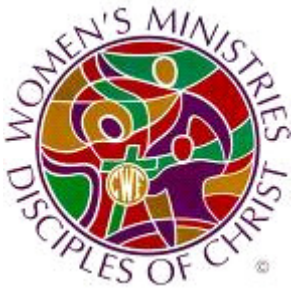
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### WOMEN AND MINISTRY - THE FIRST OF A SERIES HOW DID YOU HEAR YOUR CALL?

BY ERIN CURTIS

Growing up, I never considered wanting to be a minister. I wanted to be a writer, a musician, a mom, but never a minister. My father is a minister, and I had some hard feelings toward the church because I felt “it” took all my dad’s time and energy away from his family. It was not until I was “grown up” that I realized my father’s unique “calling” had allowed him to be present for almost every event in my life and that he was actually more available than my friends’ fathers who were doctors, lawyers and even teachers. That aside I never had a desire to be a minister, or even marry a minister. So I went to college to be a teacher.

While at Central Missouri State University I studied English Literature and French as a Foreign Language, hoping to make myself more marketable after graduation. During this time I also served as a youth sponsor for First Christian Church in Warrensburg, MO for both the Chi-Rho and CYF youth groups. That part of ministry I loved. Three weeks out from graduation in the midst of Student teaching, I received a call from the Dean of the College of Education: they were pulling me from my assignment. Through no fault of my own I had been placed in an almost impossible situation, they told me. I was already aware of this as I had struggled through the first six weeks with no guidance from my advisor, who was having his own crises and had left not just myself, but several other student teachers hanging. I was promised any position I wanted in the fall, but I would not graduate. Driving home I was empty.



“I have  
learned to  
never say  
never.”

Erin Curtis

I began to pray. I asked God for a sign, any sign of what God wanted for me. While I never wanted to be a minister, I had a very strong faith that God knew what was out there for me and I trusted God's plan. I remember saying, “I place all of this in your hands,” and then feeling at peace. Before leaving the high school where I had been teaching, I had called my father to tell him what was happening. He in turn called the minister, an interim, at my church; my parents were worried about me. When I arrived home there was a message from Harry Spear on my machine.

I went down to the church to meet with Harry. Harry asked if I would be interested in applying for the position of Youth Coordinator for the Interim Period. I told him unequivocally I was not interested in being a minister. He told me I didn't have to be a minister, just a mentor for the kids, but he had that look. Still, I applied and was called to the position.

Next Harry told me I would need to go to camp with the kids and gave me the name of the director, Rev. Jack Daniel. Jack invited me to be his “gofer” and then the day before camp called to ask if I could also be a counselor since one had become very ill and had to drop out. I like camp, so this wasn't a problem. It was a great week, fun in the extreme. I decided I could do youth work and still be a teacher. Then Jack asked me when I was going to seminary. I smiled, “I'm not.” He assured me I would be a good minister. I smiled again and said, “I don't think so.” He raised his eyebrows and shook his head.

You may ask, why so resistant? Recall I had a bad taste in my mouth because of what I perceived, wrongly or not, in my own family. However, it went deeper; I didn't feel called. Everyone I had ever known who was a minister had pretty much felt called from the beginning; they knew in high school; they were religion majors who went to church colleges who met their spouses at church camp or in campus ministries. They had all had deeply spiritual encounters and some had even had visions or heard the voice of God. While I had had deeply moving experiences in my faith life, I wasn't on the peerage of these “faith giants”. I wanted to be a teacher who could write her novel in the summer; that was my call.

At the end of the week we had our final worship together and made the big closing circle. In the Midwest Region we do an “alter call” at closing circle for anyone who feels called into ministry. I closed my eyes and began to pray for those who would step into the circle. When I opened my eyes again, I was standing inside the circle. My first thought was, “What happened?” Maybe the kids had bamboozled me? I didn't recall moving. Then I felt a cool breeze come out of the trees and a feeling of calm. There was no voice, no softly focused figure or vision drawing me forward. There was just a calm understanding. All those months ago I had placed my future in God's hands, and I was right where God intended me to be. And when I stopped fighting, I realized God had called me to be a teacher all along, God's teacher. So, I graduated with a B.A. in English, served FCC-Warrensburg for another year, and then I went to seminary.

Along the way God has changed my direction more than once, and I have learned to never say never.



## Quadrennial Assembly 1010 Awake! Awake!

June 23 –27, 2010

Greensboro, NC

“Awake! Awake Deborah!  
Awake! Awake, break out in song!”

Judges 5:12

[www.quadrennial.org](http://www.quadrennial.org)

## MISSIONS

### Ecuador-FEDICE

The New Ecuador Project is a partnership between Christian Church in Oregon, FEDICE & Global Ministries. Oregon Disciples are working with FEDICE to assist with a program of economic development in a country where 70-80% of the people live in poverty. Oregon Disciples committed to raise \$39,000 for urgent needs identified by FEDICE. Women's Groups, Congregations and Regional Events have raised over 47% of this goal! Women's Ministries continue to support this mission through Pray & Play Day and Retreat offerings.



### Women's Action Web-Follow-up on Journey through Hunger

In July '09, two of us from Salem FCC took a journey through hunger with the WAW in our region. The experience was not only informative and exciting but life changing. We joined 12 other women from our region. Together we saw and experienced amazing programs that Disciple's congregations in our state are doing to make an impact on feeding our brothers and sisters. At the end of the journey we were each given time and \$50.00 to decide how we might return to our home churches and provide the seeds for a program in our Church. This meant determining what needs for feeding the hunger were not met in our own local community and then act as a catalyst for a new start. My fellow traveler and I sat down and came up with three programs we wanted to either start or expand in our home Church.

The first was a Harvest Team patterned after the Community Garden Program we learned about in our WOW journey. Our second project came from an idea of adopting a neighborhood surrounding our Church and providing feeding needs there. HOME feeds kids on the weekdays but is closed on the weekends. The seed money we received was used to provide Christmas dinner for 50 kids at the center. This goal has ignited a Sunday School class to become involved with HOME. We now want to move to feeding on one weekend day a week patterned after Corvallis FCC program). The third goal we have is for our Church to take one week of each of the summer months to provide food and shelter for the families of Inter-Faith Hospitality Network.

The most exciting part of this journey for both of us is seeing our congregation "pick up the ball and roll with these programs." Or to see the planted seeds grow.

Thankfully submitted by Susan Latham and Deanna Costello.

## Quotation of the Month

**If you want something you have never had, you must be willing to do something you have never done.**

~Dr Shaun Marler



**REGIONAL WOMEN'S  
MINISTRY**

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**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**  
**WWW.OREGONDISCIPLES.ORG**

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**Women's Regional Ministry Circle  
Christian Church in Oregon**



Thank you for reading our newsletter. Please send it on to others and forward to us your e-mail address to get it sent directly to you each month.

*Play and Pray Days*

*2010*



*sailing with the spirit*

**Pray and Play Days  
Sailing with the Spirit**

Grants Pass Christian Church May 22  
LaGrande Christian Church June 16

9:30-12:30  
9:30-12:30

Many thanks to our host Churches!

