

HAND TO HAND, SISTER TO SISTER

AN AMERICAN BAPTIST WOMEN OF OREGON PUBLICATION



WORKING WOMEN

American Baptist women work, and work hard. While 70 ABW gathered to celebrate spiritual growth through healthy nutrition at Arrah Wanna during our September Retreat, Portland's First Baptist participated in a downtown compassion clinic. Read on from **Carol Wheeler of First Baptist Portland ...**

"On September 18, 2010, over 500 volunteers representing more than 70 different churches and organizations worked together to be a tangible expression of God's love and compassion for those in need in our community. The Clinic, a ministry of the umbrella organization Compassion Connect (www.compassionconnect.org), offered a variety of services to 718 guests on that Saturday.

**WORKING TOGETHER TO BE A TANGIBLE
EXPRESSION OF GOD'S LOVE**

First Baptist Church provided eleven volunteers (five of us sisers in faith--Ethel Fazzolari, Tami Goranson, Bev Simmons, Sue Townley & myself) working in medical care, hospitality, safety, prayer ministry, pet care and set up/tear down. Services

December 2010

What's Inside:

- Women Work!
- Ministry Updates
- Building Houses
- Little Sisters

provided included chiropractic, vision, dental, medical, immunizations, haircuts, and over 1500 meals were served and 2000 lbs of clothing distributed.

It was inspirational volunteering with so many believers from other churches and denominations, emphasizing what we have in common...our faith in Jesus Christ and the desire to be a witness for Him in our community. The appreciation and gratitude expressed by our guests was very moving, especially considering some of their current life situations. Each guest with whom I was privileged to pray was thankful for the clinic and touched by the fact that different churches had come together for the good of the community. It felt as if we were having the opportunity to experience the church that Jesus prayed for in John 17:23, "...so that they may be completely one, in order that the world may know that you sent me and that you love them as you love me."

I was there to give and to witness for Christ, and came away blessed and inspired by those with whom I was working and who I came to serve."



MINISTRY UPDATES



Rainbow Acres didn't meet us face to face, as was our original plan. However, they most certainly are benefiting from scores of gifts sent from churches all over Oregon. Way to go, White Cross gift givers! The ranchers at Rainbow will have a good Christmas thanks to the generosity of all of you.



Cedar Hills Baptist has been busy about our Father's work, reports **Sally Brown**. Fall cleaning prepared the way for a variety of monthly projects, including the gathering and shipping of hygiene and baby kits for Church World Service, Rainbow Acres White Cross gifts, participation in Beaverton's Compassion Clinic, ongoing ministry to women in prison, and (whew) plans for Valentine baskets to shut-ins.

Eastwood Baptist in Medford continues to fight the sex trade through non-conventional methods. **Walda Reeder** provided an update on this ministry... "In these few words I can just begin to capture the saga of our two year outreach to a local strip dance club. Only the power of God could explain the opening of doors and the receptivity of hearts at this place. From our tentative beginning in December 2008, we are now welcomed as non-judgmental encouragers by the 60 dancers.

Relationships have been slowly built with managers, bouncers, bartenders and DJ's. The gifts we bring on holidays, and the individual birthday cakes and celebrations tell of God's love for them. We are doing 5 birthdays in November, baskets of Thanksgiving goodies and 60 gift bags at Christmas. At our November ABW meeting one of the bartenders came with her 5 month old baby daughter. She expressed thanks for our prayers and baby gifts and just for loving her. We are allowed to hang six foot wide signs in the dressing room with Scripture verses. The December one says, "The True Meaning of Christmas is Immanuel - God with Us". Our visits are eagerly anticipated by the club, and by the AB women who go into this dark place where God's love is needed so desperately."

The **ABW Willamette Association** combined their business meeting with a high-impact seminar on sex trafficking in Portland. Grant Park of Portland hosted the event in October, and there was standing room only. A challenge was issued: opportunities abound for service to those who've been held hostage in the demonic cycle of sex trade for profit. ABW were moved to action and we are sure to hear more about this in coming months.

ABW Spring Conference

Saturday, April 9, 2011

9:00 am to 2:00 pm

*Emerald Baptist Church
Eugene, Oregon*

*Guest Speaker:
Pam Congdon of
Project Hope*

More information to come!



MOVING BARRIERS... BUILDING HOUSES



Rivergate Community Church had physical barriers - STAIRS. We had 6 steps to get into our building and 16 steps to go down to the fellowship hall and to the only bathrooms in the church.

**EVERY CHURCH HAS BARRIERS...THEY
COME IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES.**

Over the years we had to turn people away from memorial services and weddings because they physically couldn't get into the building. We had looked at lots of options - but it became clear that the only viable choice was to put in a lift (like an elevator), but that was going to cost close to \$100,000 which the church didn't have.

Rivergate purchased the land in North Portland almost 60 years ago with the hope of one day building a large sanctuary on the lot. We planted trees that were now over 100 feet tall and we parked our cars on the "north 40". So, when the idea of making the church handicapped accessible was discussed we realized the Lord had provided the way for us to improve our building: by selling part of the land we had owned for all those years. After much prayer and the leading of the Lord we contacted Habitat For Humanity to see if they had any interest in purchasing the land. It was

obvious the Lord had gone before us as Habitat was in the market to build homes in North Portland. The biggest decision we had to make was that Habitat cannot pay market rate for the land, so Rivergate decided to partner with Habitat and take less money for the land and also allow Habitat to pay for the purchase over time.

The whole process has taken over 2 1/2 years, but today you can hear the sound of hammer and nails each week as homes for 12 families are being built at the project called **Rivergate Commons**. The families purchase the homes at no interest and are required to put in 500 hours of sweat equity. It has been a great partnership for Habitat and Rivergate. We have hosted potlucks and lunches as well as helping to actually build the homes. There are great opportunities for anyone who would like to come out and help with the building. You don't have to have any skills as they have jobs for everyone. The only requirement is that you have to be 16 years of age or older to volunteer. The first families will move in after the holidays and the building will continue through 2011. For more information contact Pastor Frank at pastorfrankwest@gmail.com.

The project has been a wonderful blessing to the church as well as the entire North Portland community. It is the first of several outreach projects the church has been involved with over the past couple of years. We have also put in a community garden and excited about other partnerships for the future.

Whatever barrier your church may be facing, the Lord has an answer for you. We at Rivergate only wanted to make the church accessible - which has allowed outside groups to also use our building, but the Lord had bigger plans for us. Our job was to step out in faith and to follow His leading. It has been a great journey and we are so excited about the future.

Rev. Carren Woods

www.rivergatecommunitychurch.org



HELPING LITTLE SISTERS

GROW—*an encouraging word from your ABW President, Trudi Bils*

American Baptist Women are turning the page to a new decade, a new century, perhaps even a new millennium. As I visit with ABW across our state I hear similar stories about difficulties older ABW women have trying to connect with their younger counterparts.



Do not despair, ABW! For in fact, though you encounter struggles, there is **HOPE!**

It may be difficult to see with the naked eye, but make no mistake. God is not finished with American Baptist Women of Oregon! He is busy bringing up a new generation of young women...women who are eager to do His bidding. You can be a part of His work, as well. Help ABW of Oregon build a financial base to provide scholarships for young women and girls to attend the ABW Conference in July, 2011. Or keep building your own scholarship fund and send a girl or young woman to Green Lake in 2011. The ABW of Oregon would like to send **12 girls or young women** to the conference in July. For ways to help, give me a shout out at trudib@abwomenoregon.org or call me. 402-312-5982



RECIPIENT NAME
STREET ADDRESS
ADDRESS 2
CITY, ST ZIP CODE